HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™ OMNIBUS

"BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

...I HAVE THE POWER!"

DC ENTERTAINMENT™

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MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™

GEOFF JOHNS HOWARD PORTER JOHN LIVESAY

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™

The Lost Knight

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Long ago on the planet Eternia.
Centuries before Prince Adam would claim the sword of King Grayskull and became Eternia's savior.
Yet even then, it was a world of science and magic, of heroes and heroes yet to be, of monsters--
--and of the savage beastmen.
RRRORR.

RRFG
DON'T LOOK BACK!

THE
LOST
KNIGHT
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WE STOP AND WE DIE.

WE CAN'T OUTRUN THEM.
WE NEED TO GET TO THE RIVER. THEY WON'T FOLLOW US INTO THE RIVER.
WE WON'T MAKE IT OUT OF THE RIVER. NOT WITH WHAT'S IN IT.
SCAREGLOWS ARE ONLY A STORY.
SO WERE THE BEASTMEN.
YOU SAVED MY LIFE ONCE BEFORE. NOW I'M GOING TO SAVE YOURS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I CAN GIVE YOU SOME TIME. TIME ENOUGH FOR YOU TO--

NO!
WE DIE, WE DIE TOGETHER, BROTHER.
AND WE DIE FIGHTING THE BEST WE CAN.
DIE FIGHTING?

THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GO.

STAY BACK.
US OR THEM?
YOU.

BEASTS.

BEASTS WERE MADE TO KILL.
KKKKKKKKKK

RAARGHH--!
WZSHHH

KRAKKSH
KSSS

OTHERS WILL SMELL THE BLOOD. THEY'LL COME TO EAT. YOU NEED TO GO.
GO WHERE?
HOME.
WE CAN'T.
WHY NOT?
WE'RE FROM TRATVERA.
IT WAS BURNED AFTER KING GRAYSKULL'S DEATH.
...YOUR FAMILY?
THEY BURNED TOO.

WHO ARE YOU?
YOU FIGHT LIKE A KNIGHT!
I'M NOT A KNIGHT.
RAAOOOO
BEASTMEN!
WHAT DO WE DO?

"I'LL GET YOU SOMEWHERE SAFE."
YOU LIVE HERE?
DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING.
IS THAT YOUR HELMET?
STOP.

BUT YOU ARE A KNIGHT.
YOU'RE SIR LASER LOT.
I THOUGHT SIR LASER LOT DIED WITH KING GRAYSKULL.
I SHOULD'VE.
THAT'S THE GEM OF TALMADGE.
THEY SAY IT WAS FORGED OUT OF A DRAGON'S HEART. ONE YOU SLAYED YOURSELF.
IS IT TRUE IF ANYONE TOUCHES YOU THEY BURN?
IT IS THE CURSE OF THE GEM. I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT IT AND IT CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT ME.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

I FAILED OUR KING. I LOST HIS SWORD. BUT I WILL FIND IT AND THE CHOSEN ONE WHO SHALL WIELD IT AND LEAD US BACK TO GREATNESS.
AND AFTER THAT, I'LL HUNT DOWN THOSE WHO MURDERED KING GRAYSKULL.
I'LL BURN THEM. SLOWLY.
WHAT IS THAT?
I SEE THE SKULL!
I SEE THE PAST! THE FAR PAST!

HURRY. BEFORE AGENT SPECTOR SENSES THIS DISRUPTION IN TIME. BRING THE SKULL TO ME.
THE SKULL IS SACRED! WHOEVER YOU ARE--
AARGHHH!
AND ETERNIA SHALL BE REMADE.

THE SKULL OF POWER IS OURS, SKELETOR.
BUT WHO IS THIS?
END: PROLOGUE

DC ENTERTAINMENT™

#1

HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®

JAMES ROBINSON
PHILIP TAN
RUY JOSÉ

SEP 2012
DCCOMICS.COM

I DREAMT LAST NIGHT THAT I WAS SOMEONE ELSE.

SOMEONE MIGHTY.

SOMEONE BRAVE.

A HERO.

THE SEEKER

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I DREAMT HE FOUGHT A GREAT AND TERRIBLE THREAT TO HIS WORLD.

WITH ITS LEADER THE EMBODIMENT OF EVIL.

THE HERO THAT I WAS, AND MY ENEMY TOO, BOTH OF US HAD OTHERS ON OUR SIDES...

...THAT FOUGHT EACH OTHER, ALL OF THEM WITH THEIR OWN SPECIFIC POWERS AND TALENTS.

YES, I DREAMT THIS BATTLE AND IT WAS GLORIOUS.

AND WITH GOOD ALWAYS WINNING.

YES, IT WAS A GOOD DREAM BUT ONLY THAT. A DREAM. A FANCY. A PICTURE.

NOTHING MORE.

AWAKING, I'M REMINDED WHO I REALLY AM, THOUGH I TAKE NO PRIDE IN ADMITTING IT.

I AM ADAM, A WOODSMAN, AND THAT IS ALL. SIMPLE.

WITHOUT THE POWER OR INDEED THE VALOR...

...TO CHANGE THIS HORRIBLE WORLD.

ADAM? I'M HUNGRY, ADAM.

IS THIS THE GOOD CHINA? I ALWAYS EAT BREAKFAST ON THE GOOD CHINA, YOU KNOW THAT, ADAM.

MY FATHER FEDOR WAS THE WOODSMAN HERE BEFORE ME.

HIS MIND BEGAN TO ROAM A FEW YEARS BACK AND OF LATE IT SEEMS TO HAVE WANDERED AWAY FOR GOOD.

HERE, FATHER. FROM THE ROYAL KITCHENS AND ON OUR BEST CHINA.

I REMEMBER WHEN HE WAS A VIGOROUS AND SAGE MAN, MY FATHER. I REMEMBER--

NO. UPON REFLECTION, I'M NOT SURE WHAT I REMEMBER. MY LIFE, THE WOODS...

AT TIMES IT ALL SEEMS SO... VAGUE.

IT'S FINE. I SUPPOSE.

WHY WOULD A WOODSMAN LIKE ME NEED GREATER CLARITY THAN THE TREES AND MY AX?

NOT THAT I WOULDN'T WELCOME A CLEARER PATH IN LIFE...IF SOMEONE...

OH...

...OR SOMETHING... WERE TO SHOW ME THE WAY.

HELLO, YOU.

IT APPEARS I'VE MADE A FRIEND.

FUNNY...

...AS I LOOK AT IT, IT'S LIKE I'VE KNOWN THIS FALCON FOREVER.

IN FACT...

I KNOW YOUR NAME. I JUST REALIZED, IT'S AS CLEAR IN MIND AS IF YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF.

ZOAR.

GO ON, OFF YOU FLY. COME SEE ME TOMORROW.

THOUGH I WONDER...

...WHERE DO YOU GO?

I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO.

I REALLY AM IN YOUR DEBT, MA'AM, FOR LOOKING AFTER MY FATHER WHILE I'M GONE.

NO TROUBLE AT ALL, ADAM, YOU'RE ALWAYS DOING CHORES FOR ME, AFTER ALL, AND MY CABIN'S NOT THAT LONG A WALK FROM HERE.

BUT I CONFESS I'M CURIOUS WHY YOU'RE GOING AT ALL. WHY WOULD YOU LEAVE THE WOODS, YOUR HOME?

WHY? SIMPLE. YES, THE WOODS ARE HOME...BUT SUDDENLY I'M FILLED WITH A NEED I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND...

"...TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD."

YOU'RE GETTING A BIT FAR FROM HOME, ADAM, DON'T YOU THINK?...

IF I WAS YOU, I'D TURN AROUND...

...FOR YOUR OWN SAKE.

NO! IT CAN'T--THIS IS INSANITY!

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU?

WAIT--HOW-- WHY DOES HE EVEN KNOW WHO I AM?

YOU'RE MISTAKEN...YOU HAVE TO BE... DIFFERENT ADAM.

I'M JUST A WOODS-MAN!

JUST DEAD WHEN BEAST MAN IS DONE WITH YOU!

GET BACK!

GRRRR... YOU WANT TO MAKE THIS FUN FOR ME, EH?

NO! NO, I--

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIGHT HIM.

I SHOULD...

...SHOULD...

...RUN!

RHAAA

HAVE TO USE WHAT I DO KNOW...

NO ESCAPE!

...THE SKILLS I HAVE!

...THE WOOD AND MY AX IN IT!

NHRRR

I'M SURPRISING MYSELF...

...BETTER AT THIS THAN I THOUGHT.

GRRR... I'LL GET YOU, ADAM...

...GET YOU AND GUT YOU!

YOU HEAR ME!

HEAR YOU?

THE WHOLE OF ETERNIA CAN HEAR YOU!

ARHHGRRRR

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

HE GOT ME, SURE...

...BUT I GOT HIM TOO. DREW BLOOD!

I CAN...MAYBE...

GRAAHHH

...I CAN...

...BEAT HIM.

FOCUS, ADAM. YOUR OWN FEAR...

...IT'S MORE HARMFUL TO YOU THAN THIS BEAST MAN CREATURE...MAKING YOU LOSE THIS FIGHT BEFORE IT'S EVEN OVER.

YES, FOCUS...

AND USE THE SKILLS I HAVE...

...THE WOOD...

...AND MY AX IN IT!

NOW--

MISSED ME, ADAM!

FOOL, DON'T YOU SEE THAT--

NO BEASTMAN, IT'S YOU WHO DOESN'T SEE...

...IT WASN'T YOU I WAS AIMING AT TO BEGIN WITH!

ARRRHHHH!

GRARGH!

QUIET. ENOUGH.

YOU WERE A LOT OF HELP.

THERE IS A QUESTION THAT BEARS REPEATING, THOUGH...

...HOW DID BEASTMAN KNOW WHO I WAS?...AND WHY?...

...AND WHY DIDN'T HE WANT ME TO VENTURE FROM THE FOREST?

LEAD ON, ZOAR! SHOW ME THE WAY!

ADAM MUST BE STOPPED. AND QUICKLY!

THE FURTHER HE GOES, THE MORE HE MAY FIND OUT.

SPREAD THE WORD! TELL THEM ADAM MUST BE STOPPED... ALIVE OR DEAD IT IS OF NO MATTER.

TELL THEM, LORD? TELL WHO?

EVERYONE!

NEXT: THE FATE OF TEELA!

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HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®

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OCT 2012

CASTLE GRAYSKULL

...FOUGHT LIKE ONE BORN TO COMBAT!

A WOODSMAN'S AXE! HE WAS ARMED WITH A SIMPLE WOODSMAN'S AXE YET HE WIELDED IT AS IF IT WERE A BATTLE AXE!

DESERT STORM

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THERE IS TOO MUCH OF WHO HE WAS YET WITHIN HIM!

INSTINCT!

HIS MIND DOES NOT REMEMBER BUT HIS BODY DOES!

:SIGH: A LITANY OF EXCUSES.

MASTER, IT WAS NOT MY--

ENOUGH.

IT WAS A SIMPLE ENOUGH TASK I LAID BEFORE YOU, WAS IT NOT?

SHOULD MY WRETCHED NEPHEW VIOLATE THE BOUNDARIES I SET FOR HIM... KILL HIM.

HNGH... M-MASTER?

YEEAAGHH!

KR-RAUNCH

NOT SO DIFFICULT A TASK AT ALL, IF YOU COME RIGHT DOWN TO IT.

YAAHAAGHH!

KRUNKTCH

AND YET, SOMEHOW, THIS SIMPLE TASK PROVED TOO MUCH FOR YOU.

MASTER... P-PLEASE...

THUP

THWUD

BEASTMAN THANKS YOU, MASTER. MERCIFUL IS SKELETOR. YOUR SERVANT THANKS YOU...

INTOLERABLE.

THD

-:GASP!:-

I HAVE THE POWER NOW. NOW AND *FOREVER!*

THEY WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP THAT IN MIND, FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE...

THE SIMPLEST TASKS! HOW IS IT I FIND MYSELF SURROUNDED BY CRETINS INCAPABLE OF PERFORMING EVEN THE *SIMPLEST* OF *TASKS?!*

HIS MEMORY IS GONE! *ALL* OF THEIR MEMORIES ARE GONE! THEY ARE HELPLESS, *MINE* TO MANIPULATE AS I SEE FIT!

WHY DOES ALL OF THIS FEEL FAMILIAR, AS IF I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE?

EVERY STEP I'VE TAKEN SINCE LEAVING HOME FEELS TWICE TRODDEN.

HOW CAN PLACES I'VE NEVER BEEN TRIGGER MEMORIES I SHOULDN'T HAVE?

HUH...MORE TO THE POINT, HOW COULD I HAVE **EVER** FORGOTTEN SUCH RAW SPLENDOR?

IS THIS WHY YOU LEAD ME ON? IS THIS WHY I FOLLOW DESPITE NOT FULLY UNDERSTANDING? TO REMEMBER?

REMEMBER ***WHAT***, ZOAR? PLACES I MIGHT HAVE BEEN? PEOPLE I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN?

-:SIGH:- IF ONLY YOU COULD TALK.

AH, YOU SEE IT TOO? WE'LL SOON HAVE COMPANY IF THEY STAY THEIR COURSE.

CHT

GREETINGS, DESERT RIDERS. I AM A STRANGER TO THESE LANDS AND FIND MYSELF SHORT OF WATER.

COULD YOU POINT ME IN THE DIRECTION OF AN OASIS OR SPRING SOURCE?

IT IS HIM.

VERY GOOD. SEE TO HIM.

THPT

!?!

CHT

THUP

REMEMBER, ALIVE AND UNHARMED!

DO WE LOOK FOOLS TO YOU?

QUICK! QUICK! WE MUST SEE TO HIM BEFORE HE COMES TO!

ARID SPRING OASIS

MAKE WAY! HIS LORDSHIP COMMANDS THE PRISONER'S PRESENCE! MAKE WAY!

ON YOUR KNEES BEFORE THE PRESENCE!

NNGH!

THWUD

MY, MY, MY...HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN.

DO NOT WASTE YOUR ENERGY STRUGGLING. THOSE RESTRAINTS WERE BUILT *SPECIFICALLY* TO HOLD YOU.

SPECIFICALLY? *ME?*

YOUR UNCLE SENDS HIS REGARDS. THAT *AND* A WRIT OF EXECUTION.

DOES THIS "UNCLE" HAVE A NAME?

IT WOULD HAVE LITTLE MEANING TO YOU.

HOW ABOUT LETTING ME BE THE JUDGE OF THAT?

SKELETOR.

AH...HEARING HIS NAME DISTURBS YOU, DOES IT? WELL IT *SHOULD.*

HE IS, AFTER ALL, THE ARCHITECT OF YOUR DOWN-FALL.

I DON'T KNOW THAT NAME!

OF COURSE YOU DO NOT. IT IS HIS *WILL* THAT YOU DO NOT.

IT IS ALSO HIS WILL THAT YOU SHOULD DIE NEVER KNOWING.

TCHA...WHERE *ARE* MY MANNERS? I AM KRONIS, ALSO CALLED TRAPJAW...THANKS TO YOU. I WOULD WELCOME YOU TO MY HUMBLE CARAVAN, BUT I AM AFRAID YOU WILL NOT SURVIVE LONG ENOUGH TO ENJOY ITS AMENITIES.

PEN HIM.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!

BECAUSE NOT DOING SO WOULD BE TO INCUR THE WRATH OF SKELETOR.

SLEEP WELL, ADAM. TOMORROW YOU PETITION FOR YOUR LIFE.

GRUH... SNF...YOU HAVE BUSINESS WITH THE PRISONER, WENCH?

KRONIS ORDERED HIM GIVEN WATER. HE WANTS THE PRISONER WELL FIT TO PETITION.

GO ON THEN. PERHAPS THIS ONE WILL BE GOOD FOR A BIT OF SPORT.

KRONIS DIDN'T COME ACROSS AS SOMEONE OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT FAIR PLAY.

HE'S NOT.

AH. THEN THERE WAS NO ORDER?

KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN OR WE'RE *BOTH* DEAD.

WHY DO I FEEL I SHOULD KNOW YOUR NAME?

THE VERY QUESTION I CAME TO ASK *YOU*. I WAS THERE WHEN YOU WERE BROUGHT BEFORE TRAP--

AH, AMID MY MANY ADMIRERS?

JOKE IF YOU MUST--

SITUATION SUCH AS THIS, SEEMS TO ME I CAN LAUGH OR I CAN SCREAM. I'M NOT BIG ON SCREAMING.

SO YOU SAY. HERE. TAKE SOME WATER BEFORE THE GUARD GETS SUSPICIOUS.

YOU DO HAVE A NAME?

DESERT WIND.

THAT'S A SLAVE NAME. TRY AGAIN.

TEELA.

MY NAME IS TEELA.

RIGHT THEN! THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT! A CYBORG-CAMEL COULDN'T DRINK THAT MUCH WATER!

BACK TO YOUR DOINGS, WENCH!

TEELA...

OF ALL THE TIMES FOR **THAT** ONE TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF DUTY. COULDN'T HAVE JUST FALLEN ASLEEP LIKE EVERY OTHER FOUL-UP I'VE ENCOUNTERED...

OKAY, ADAM, JUST EXACTLY **WHEN** HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED A FOUL-UP OF **ANY** KIND?

GUESS I CAN ADD THAT TO THE GROWING LIST OF QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN DOGGING ME EVER SINCE I SET OUT.

MAYBE TOMORROW WILL OFFER A FEW ANSWERS.

YOU ARE READY?
I HAVE A CHOICE?
EXCELLENT. YOU KNOW HOW THIS WORKS?
HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE.
IT IS SIMPLICITY ITSELF. YOU CHOOSE THE PERSON YOU WILL PETITION FOR YOUR FREEDOM. SHOULD THAT PERSON DENY YOU, YOU FIGHT TO THE DEATH.
SHOULD YOU SURVIVE, YOU PETITION AGAIN...AND AGAIN UNTIL YOUR PETITION IS GRANTED OR YOU OR THOSE YOU MIGHT PETITION ARE DEAD.
AND IF I DON'T FEEL LIKE KILLING ALL OF YOU?
THEN... PETITION DENIED.
CHOOSE OR DIE.

CHUKT

UK.

HIM.

PLEASE LET THIS WORK, PLEASE LET THIS WORK...

GOT IT!

WHUP

THE SWORD?! WHY DID I TAKE THE SWORD?! WHAT WAS I THINKING?!

I'M A WOODSMAN, NOT A WARRIOR!

OKAY...BROKE CLEAR. NOW WHAT?!

RUN AWAY? DON'T MIND IF I DO.

WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION, RUN AWAY TO WHERE?

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT THIS THROUGH BETTER BEFORE TORQUING OFF THE WHOLE CAMP.

YUP. DEFINITELY SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT THROUGH BETTER.

UM... EN GARDE?

HEY, I'M NOT THAT BAD AT THIS, CONSIDERING I'VE NEVER HELD A SWORD BEFORE IN MY LIFE!

THAT I REMEMBER.

"THAT I REMEMBER"?! WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!

SAME PLACE AS THESE SWORD SKILLS?

MAYBE I SHOULD STOP LOOKING A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH AND JUST GO WITH IT.

I MAY NOT REMEMBER ANY SWORD SKILLS BUT MY BODY SURE DOES.

NOT TOO DISTURBING!

!?!

AN EARTHQUAKE? ON TOP OF EVERY-THING ELSE AN EARTHQUAKE?!

KRUNCH

KTK

BACK OFF, ALL OF YOU! HE IS *MINE*!

KRTCHK

KKKRTKK

AND, JUST LIKE THAT, AN EARTHQUAKE DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT BAD.

SKELETOR SOLD YOU SHORT! HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER!

A SPIRIT SUCH AS YOURS CAN NEVER BE BROKEN!

CLA-TANG

THANKS. I THINK.

LET IT BE KRONIS' FIGHT, THEN! LET IT BE ABOUT REVENGE!

REVENGE?!

DO I GET TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS I DID!?

NO, NO, NO! DON'T START FIGHTING LIKE A WOODSMAN NOW!

WOULD YOU DENY WHAT YOUR EYES SEE?! BEHOLD TRAPJAW! BEHOLD YOUR HANDIWORK!

JAW?! I DID THAT!?

KLANGK!

RMMB-RM-MMBRRR-MBL

BUT I'VE NEVER EVEN *SEEN* YOU BEFORE!

DIE WITH THE LIE, MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE! DIE WITH THE LIE!

EH...?

NO. NOT NOW...NOT WHEN I'M SO CLOSE...

RMMBL-RM-MMBL-MMBRRR-MBLL

NOT NOOMMMMMMM

GO LIMP!

TEELA? WH--? YOU... *YOU* DID THIS?!

LOOKS THAT WAY. NOW DO ME A FAVOR AND DUMMY UP UNTIL I GET US CLEAR.

RMMBLRM-BLMM-BRRRM-BLL

YOU AND ME, SOMETHING TELLS ME WE'VE GOT A *LOT* TO TALK ABOUT.

RMMRM-MMBLRRR-MBLL

TELL ME AGAIN WHY YOU DIDN'T JUST SLIT HIS THROAT?

...COULDN'T VERY WELL LET THEM KILL YOU.

ACTUALLY, YES, YOU COULD.

FINE. THEN I *OPTED* NOT TO LET THEM KILL YOU.

BY STAMPEDING THEIR BURDEN BEASTS.

WHAT? WHAT'S WITH THE TONE OF VOICE?

I MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN TRAMPLED TOO.

REALLY? I SAVE YOUR LIFE AND YOU HAND ME GRIEF?

HONESTLY, ADAM, YOU ARE THE MOST SELF-CENTER--

WHAT DID YOU JUST CALL ME?

ADAM. THAT IS YOUR NAME, ISN'T IT?

AND YOU KNEW THIS-- HOW?

I...DON'T KNOW. I MEAN, I JUST KNEW... IT WAS...

WELCOME TO MY HELL.

WERE YOU TO ASK ME I WOULD SWEAR THAT, BEFORE TODAY, I HAD NEVER HELD A SWORD. AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNI--

OH!

RELAX. IT'S ONLY ZOAR.

AND WHERE WERE YOU WHEN I NEEDED YOU?

ADAM? REMEMBER I SAID WE'VE GOT A LOT TO TALK ABOUT?

WOULD YOU MIND MUCH IF WE STARTED WITH THE FACT THAT THAT'S *NOT* A BIRD?

NEXT: BLOODTIDE!

DC ENTERTAINMENT™

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HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®

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NOV 2012

SAND'S END.

...THAT GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD EXPLAINING NOTHING.

SCULLERY LIL'S

YOU HAVE A BETTER EXPLANATION?

THEN MAYBE YOU SHOULD START ENTERTAINING THEORIES.

LIKE *YOUR* "THEORY" THAT WE'VE BOTH BEEN ENCHANTED?

CURSED. ENCHANTMENTS ARE BENEVOLENT.

YOU'RE BEGINNING TO WORRY ME, TEELA.

ARE YOU STILL UPSET ABOUT THE BIRD? WHAT DID YOU CALL IT..?

ZOAR. YES. A LITTLE.

I THINK.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ACTUALLY ***ATE*** ONE OF THESE. I CAN'T EVEN BRING MYSELF TO POKE IT TOO HARD.

TWO WORDS. GROW. UP.

LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING. YOU'VE LOOKED IN MIRRORS, THIS CAN'T BE NEWS TO YOU. NOW STOP TRYING TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT.

IS THAT WHAT I'M DOING?

THE BIRD... ZOAR'S A MYSTICAL CONSTRUCT OF SOME KIND. THAT MEANS SOMEONE'S CONTROLLING IT, SOMEONE WHO, FOR WHATEVER REASON, LED YOU TO ME.

HUH... SOMEONE'S AWFULLY FULL OF HERSELF. HOW DO YOU KNOW I WAS LED TO YOU?

IT FEELS RIGHT.

YEAH. IT DOES.

AND NOW ***BOTH*** OF US ARE BEING LED SOMEPLACE ELSE.

UH-HUH.

BY A MYSTICAL CONSTRUCT OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN BEING CONTROLLED BY A PERSON OR PERSONS UNKNOWN.

YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

"I GUESS NOT."

BLOOD TIDE

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NEVER AGAIN.
HONESTLY, HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN THIS WHINY?
NEVER AGAIN.
OKAY. MAYBE I DID NEGLECT TO TELL YOU A FEW OF THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE WERE GRANTED PASSAGE.
LIKE THE FACT THAT I'D WORK OFF HALF OF THE FARE?
CYBER-CAMELS ARE A DIME A DOZEN. YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY I GOT AS MUCH FOR IT AS I DID.
THAT MERCHANT DROVE A HARD BARGAIN.
I WISH YOU'D STOP DOING THAT. IT REALLY CREEPS ME.
ALL THE TIME IT WAS PERCHED ON YOUR SHOULDER YOU NEVER--
I WAS... DISTRACTED.
YEAH. TWO SETS OF MEMORIES IN ONE HEAD WILL DO THAT TO A PERSON.
NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT ZOAR HERE SEEMS TO HAVE THE ILLUSION OF WEIGHT. THERE'S SOME PRETTY SOPHISTICATED SORCERY AT WORK HERE.
YEAH... BUT WHOSE?
LESS TALK, MORE SCRUB, SWAB. Y'LL NEVER WORK OFF Y'R FARE AT THIS RATE.
YES, SIR. ON IT, SIR.
NEVER, *EVER* AGAIN.

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

...MAKING THIS SO MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN IT NEED BE.

AM I NOT A GRACIOUS HOST? ARE NOT ALL OF YOUR NEEDS SEEN TO?

SHOULD THINK YOUR FREEDOM IS A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR SUCH MAGNANIMITY ON MY PART.

AND I ASK SO LITTLE OF YOU...

WAS THAT A SMIRK? HMH...WELL DESERVED, I SUPPOSE. WHEN I THINK OF THE YEARS SPENT IN PURSUIT OF HE-MAN'S SWORD, THE YEARS SPENT BELIEVING THE *SWORD* WAS THE POWER SOURCE...

THE KEY, WHATEVER FORM IT MIGHT TAKE... THE KEY TO... THE POWER.

THE POWER STORED WITHIN THE VERY ESSENCE OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

FFF

...WHEN, IN ACTUALITY, THE SWORD DREW ITS POWER FROM THE *TRUE* SOURCE...

...CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

YOU'VE HARDLY TOUCHED YOUR FOOD. ARE YOU UNWELL?

I COULD, SHOULD YOU WISH IT, HAVE THE GUARDS ESCORT YOU BACK TO YOUR QUARTERS. YES? NO?

YOU *WILL* TALK TO ME, SORCERESS. YOU WILL TELL ME *ALL*.

THE POWER THAT LIES DORMANT WITHIN CASTLE GRAYSKULL WILL BE MINE. I AM SKELETOR. I AM INEVITABLE.

SIGH... I CAN SEE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO HAVE YOU FORCE-FED AGAIN.

DO TRY TO HOLD IT DOWN THIS TIME?

COME ON, COME *ON!* WHERE'S ALL OF THAT FANCY SWORD-PLAY?

NO, NO...LIKE *THIS!*

AT LEAST NOT CONSCIOUSLY.

I'M NOT BUYING THAT.

AND YOU'RE WILLING TO KILL ME TO MAKE YOUR POINT?

THRUST!

IT'S LIKE I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU...

...WHAT HAPPENED BACK AT THE OASIS, THAT WASN'T ME.

TANG-G

SO, WHERE'D *YOU* LEARN TO FIGHT LIKE THAT?

YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE. SEEMS TO ME I'VE *ALWAYS* KNOWN MY WAY AROUND A SWORD.

WHICH IS, YOU *DO* REALIZE, IMPOSSIBLE. *SOME*ONE HAD TO TEACH--

IF I WANTED YOU DEAD YOU'D BE DEAD.

IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER?

ACTUALLY... YES.

DOESN'T MATTER WH'R SHE L'RNED TO HANDLE A BLADE LIKE 'AT, MATTERS THAT SHE *CAN.*

MORE'N CAN BE SAID F'R YOU, SWAB.

THANKS FOR POINTING THAT OUT.

FIGG'R Y' BE AS GOOD UP AGAINST SOMEONE WANTS Y' BLOODED 'N' GONE?

THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THOSE THINGS PACING US?

PICKED UP ON THAT, DID Y'?

THERE ARE THINGS PACING US?

SCALE GLINT. THEY'VE BEEN WITH US MOST OF THE DAY.

THAT THEY HAVE. PICKED 'EM UP SOME-TIME LAST NIGHT. NOT GOOD. NOT GOOD AT ALL.

HOW DID YOU EVEN KNOW TO *LOOK?*

PSHT... GAL'S BEEN SCOPIN' OUT HER SURROUNDIN'S SINCE WE TOOKED HER ABOARD.

GOT TH' FEEL OF A COMBAT VET'RAN, SHE DOES.

WHOA, WHOA...LET'S STICK TO THE SUBJECT HERE. WE PICKED UP *WHAT* LAST NIGHT?

SEA BEASTIES. MEANS WE'VE CAUGHT TH' MER-MAN'S ATTENTION. FANCIES TH' SEAS AS HIS OWN, HE DOES.

WE'LL JUST WAIT ON HIM TILL HE TELLS US WHAT HE WANTS 'N' HOPE IT'S SOMETHING WE CAN GIVE.

IF NOT, THEN WE'LL PUT LITTLE MISSY'S SWORD SKILLS TO TH' TEST B'FORE WE DIE.

WHY DIDN'T I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT?

WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING THIS INVOLVES US?

WHAT GIVES YOU *THAT* FEELING?

KR-KNNKCHK

AH... SO *MUCH* MORE CONVENIENT WHEN THE PREY COMES TO THE PREDATOR.

JUST A HUNCH.

SHOULDN'T WE BE... I DON'T KNOW...DOING SOMETHING TO DEFEND OURSELVES?!

THE FIRST MOVE IS HIS.

WHAT, CRUSHING THE BOAT DIDN'T COUNT?!

THAT YOU HAVE MADE IT THIS FAR...*MOST* IMPRESSIVE.

LET ME GUESS. WE'VE MET?

MANY TIMES. BUT RARELY AS PRINCE ADAM.

PRINCE?!

NEWS TO ME.

EVERY- THING IS NEWS TO YOU!

CAN WE, MAYBE, FOCUS ON THE BIG FISH GUY?

FORGIVE MY DEPLORABLE LACK OF MANNERS. I AM THE OMNIPOTENCE, FIRST SON OF THE OCEAN LORD, MASTER OF THE DEPTHS, ABSOLUTE MONARCH OF THE SEVEN TIDES, THE SINGULAR WONDER AND GRAND PRESENCE; NAUTICUS AQUARIA, MER-MAN THE FIRST.

CHARMED.

THESE TWO COME WITH ME. YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE DIFFICULT ABOUT THIS, ARE YOU?

YEAH... I PROB'LY AM. TOOK THEIR COIN. RECKON I OWES THEM AS CLOSE T' SAFE PASSAGE AS I CAN GET.

YOU'LL NEVER TAKE US ALIVE!

"YOU'LL NEVER TAKE US ALIVE"!?

IT JUST... SLIPPED OUT.

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WAS GOING TO SAY IT UNTIL I DID.

SIGH... PROVE HER WRONG.

THRAKSSHK

*LET'S JUST CALL IT LANGUAGE QUITE INAPPROPRIATE FOR A COMIC BOOK AND LET IT GO AT THAT. --BOISTEROUS BEN

CHAK!

WRONG TOOL FOR THE JOB...

HEL-LO.

TRADE YA.

NOW *THIS* I CAN HANDLE. I'VE FELLED GREATER TRUNKS THAN THIS.

BRACE FOR IT!

BRACE FOR... WHAT?!

CHOP

OH, HE DID *NOT!*

WHRAK-
KA-

-KOOM

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, IT *DID* LET GO OF HER.

YOUR CONCERN IS MISPLACED!

THWUD

A ***WOODSMAN!*** NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT YOUR UNCLE DOES NOT HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR.

SMAK

BOW TO ME, LAND MEAT! ACKNOWLEDGE ME AS MASTER AND I WILL MAKE YOUR DEATH A PAINLESS ONE!

HK!

I THINK I'LL...PASS- ***HRNGH!***

KR-RAK

BETTER YOU HAD LIVED THE LIFE YOU WERE GIVEN! WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH BY DEFYING HIS WILL?!

HE-MAN IS ***DEAD!***

NNNNGH!

SNAKT

POK

NEVER!

PATHETIC! YOU RAGE YET HAVE NO IDEA ***WHY*** YOU RAGE!

KNOW THIS, "PRINCE," YOU WILL DIE ***NEVER*** KNOWING! IF MY VENGEANCE MUST TAKE ***THIS*** FORM THEN SO BE IT!

WHRUNCH

CH- CHOKE ON IT.

...

CHK

WHROOMP

DON'T YOU HATE IT WHEN THEY GET CHATTY?

TEELA!

DON'T LOOK SO HAPPY TO SEE ME, I STILL OWE YOU FOR THAT TENTACLE DUMP!

I WAS SAVING YOUR LIFE!

I FOUND OUT I CAN'T SWIM!

OH. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN--

YEAH.

HOW DID YOU--

I CLIMBED THE TENTACLE. DID YOU KNOW THAT THE SHIP IS ON FIRE?

THIS COULD BE A PROBLEM.

READ MY MIND.

FROM BEHIND...

UH-OH.

STRUCK FROM BEHIND...HARDLY IN KEEPING WITH THE CODES OF HONOR YOUR FATHER SO WORSHIPED.

FORTUNATE THAT I AM MADE OF STERNER STUFF THAN LAND MEAT.

MY FATHER SOLD ME INTO SLAVERY!

EXQUISITE! SKELETOR HAS MANAGED TO STRIP YOU OF HONOR AS WELL AS MEMORY, THE LOSS OF ONE LEADING TO THE LOSS OF THE OTHER... ***MOST*** EXQUISITE!

A PITY I HAVE NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE INCLINATION TO FORCE YOU TO CONFRONT THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU HAVE FALLEN.

YOU ***AND*** YOUR BLONDE DOLT.

BUT SKELETOR'S CHARGE WAS QUITE EXPLICIT: "KILL THE PRINCE." AND SINCE I HAVE NO DESIRE TO SHARE IN BEAST-MAN'S NOR TRAPJAW'S... DISCIPLINE...

I *WILL* SEE PRINCE ADAM DEAD BY MY HAND.

A PITY YOUR MEMORIES ARE NOT INTACT. WERE THEY, YOU WOULD HAVE REMEMBERED THAT MY COMMAND OVER MY REALM EXTENDS TO THE *REALM* ITSELF.

!?!

RIGHT. TIME TO GO.

RUN? YOU *RUN*?!

FOOLS! YOU HAVE NOWHERE TO RUN *TO!*

SHKAKA

KOOMMM

NO LAND-BORN CREATURE COULD HAVE SURVIVED SUCH A BLOW.

SKELETOR WILL BE ***MOST*** PLEASED.

IT IS GOOD.

NEXT ISSUE:
ISLAND OF DOOM!

DC ENTERTAINMENT™

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HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®

KEITH GIFFEN

POP MHAN

DCCOMICS.COM

JAN 2013

THE HARMONY SEA

... LESSON IN FUTILITY, "YOUR MAJESTY."

AT LEAST I'M DOING *SOME*THING. AND WOULD YOU, PLEASE, STOP WITH THE "YOUR MAJESTY"?

IF IT DOESN'T RAIN SOON, WON'T MATTER WHAT YOU CATCH. NOT THAT YOU STAND A CHANCE OF CATCHING ANYTHING WITH *THAT* SET-UP.

MUST YOU ALWAYS BE SO NEGATIVE?

I'M NOT NEGATIVE, I'M A *REALIST.*

I STAND CORRECTED.

I'M ALSO ROASTING IN THIS HEAT.

AND YOU SAID WE HAD NOTHING IN COMMON.

SERIOUSLY. HOW DO YOU FORGET YOU'RE A PRINCE?

WE'RE TAKING THE FISH-MAN'S WORD FOR IT?

MER-MAN.

WHY WOULD HE MAKE IT UP? I MEAN, HE MEANT TO KILL US, RIGHT?

HE MEANT TO KILL *ME*. I THINK YOU WERE JUST IN THE WAY.

HARDY-HAR-HAR.

HEY! MIRAGE BIRD! MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL! FIND LAND OR A PASSING SHIP OR WHATEVER!

I THINK YOU HURT ITS FEELINGS.

I THINK I DON'T CARE.

HOW LONG DO YOU FIGURE WE CAN LIVE WITHOUT WATER?

YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

SO...WHAT SET YOU OFF ON ALL OF THIS?

I WAS HAVING... DREAMS.

HEROISM? POWER? THWARTING EVIL? SOME GUY WITH A SKULL FACE?

EXACTLY! HOW DID YOU KNOW?

I DIDN'T. THAT'S THE STUFF *I'VE* BEEN DREAMING ABOU--

CLONK

DID YOU SEE THAT!? DID YOU *SEE!?*

SCRAG-DRAGGIN' BIRD DROPPED A COCONUT ON MY HEAD!

YEAH, YOU'D BEST FLY AWAY! IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO GET MY HANDS ON YOU I'D...

...I'D...

WHERE'D IT GET A COCONUT? *HOW'D* IT GET A COCONUT?

...

ADAM? REMEMBER WHEN I TOLD YOU THAT JURY-RIGGING A SET OF OARS WAS A WASTE OF TIME AND EFFORT?

UM-HM...

I CHANGED MY MIND.

YOU KNOW, WHEN YOU SAID "OARS" I ASSUMED *ONE* WAS FOR YOU.

ROWING GIVES YOU MAN MUSCLES.

YOU JUST MADE THAT UP.

GUILTY.

YOU FEEL IT TOO?

IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE FEELING THAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HERE...YES.

HOW CREEPY IS THAT, CONSIDERING WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE *HERE* IS?

NO CREEPIER THAN ANYTHING ELSE THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE--

THUP

ALREADY!? WE JUST *GOT* HERE!

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK JOINING UP WITH YOU WAS A *REALLY* BAD...

PFT

...IDE...A...

THEY'D BEST BE ALIVE.

SEE 'EM BREATHIN', DON'CHER?

AS LONG AS THEY'RE STILL BREATHING WHEN BROUGHT BEFORE HER MAJESTY.

WANTS TO SEE 'EM DEAD BY 'ER OWN HAND, EH?

GONNA BE A WHILE 'FORE THEY WAKES UP. GIVE 'EM A GOOD DOSE, I DID.

SIGHS... LESS TALK, MORE ACTION. GET THEM IN RESTRAINTS AND LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.

THERE IT IS. THERE IT IS ***AGAIN.*** MISTER HIGH-MUCKIN' MAN-AT-ARMS SOUNDIN' LIKE HE GOT BETTER THINGS T' DO THAN SERVE HER WILL.

CAULDRON of DOOM

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HOW YOU FIGGERIN' SHE KNEW THESE TWO'D BE COMIN' ALONG?

I'M NOT.

C'MON A'READY! NOT EVEN TH' TEENSIEST BIT'A CURIOUS HERE?

"CURIOUS" GETS YOU THROWN INTO THE CAULDRON. YOU MIGHT WANT TO KEEP THAT IN MIND.

THEM WHAT SERVES ALL LOYAL-LIKE AIN'T GOT NO REASON T' FEAR TH' CAULDRON.

YOU KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT.

JUST MIGHT. JUST MIGHT AT THAT.

HEH...YEAH, SHE A RIPE PIECE, IN'T SHE? BEEN SNEAKING PEEKS M'SELF--

CLOK

WHUZZAT!? Y'CLAIMIN' HER F'YER OWN, Y'JUST GOTTA *SEZ* SO!

NO NEED F'LIKE THIS! *WHUZIS* ALL ABOUT!?

EXQUISITE! *TRULY* EXQUISITE! DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT?

NO, MAJESTY.

JUST AS WELL. THE QUESTION *WAS* RHETORICAL.

MY APOLOGIES, MAJESTY.

DO NOT! DO *NOT* RUIN THIS MOMENT FOR ME WITH YOUR... YOUR...

WOEFUL IGNORANCE?

WOEFUL IGNORANCE, YES. WELL PUT.

YOU *ARE* CERTAIN THE BONDS WILL HOLD THEM? I'LL NOT TOLERATE ANOTHER INCIDENT LIKE--

THEY ARE *QUITE* SECURED, MAJESTY. THE REENFORCING ENCHANTMENT GUARANTEES--

SHE *IS* A PRETTY ONE, IS SHE NOT? NO, NO, DON'T BOTHER DENYING IT. YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYE ON HER FROM THE MOMENT YOU ARRIVED.

SHE IS... *FAMILIAR* TO ME.

AH, AH! I'LL HAVE *NONE* OF *THAT.*

IF IT DOES NOT ORIGINATE FROM ME IT IS IRRELEVANT.

SAY IT. *SAY* IT!

SIGHS... IF IT DOES NOT--

IT'S OFFICIAL. SHE'S A LOON.

A LITTLE *LOUDER* PERHAPS? HASTEN OUR DEATHS?

ARE YOU LISTENING TO HER?

EVIL-LYN. HER NAME IS EVIL-LYN.

...

YOU'VE *MET!?*

NO. YES. MAYBE.

HERE WE GO AGAIN.

WELL? I'M WAITING.

WAITING?

DID I OR DID I NOT ASK YOU A QUESTION?

UH-OH.

WELL? *DID* I?

THINK FAST!

ABOUT!?

JUST SAY "*YES.*" THE ONLY THING THIS BREED OF LOON HATES MORE THAN BEING IGNORED IS BEING DISAGREED WITH.

THAT CERTAIN?

HAVEN'T YOU BEEN LISTENING TO THE WAY SHE TALKS TO MY FATHER?

...

WELL, *THAT* WAS INTERESTING.

!!

ARROGANT WHELP! ONE IGNORES HER MAJESTY AT ONE'S RISK!

THOK

YES! YES TO WHATEVER, OKAY? YES!

MUCH BETTER!

TAKE THEM AND HAVE THEM PREPPED. IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE THE CAULDRON HAS SEEN GENUINE CONFLICT.

SEE THAT? TONIGHT WILL BE *SPECIAL!*

FATHER?

CAULDRON? PREPPED? JUST *WHAT* HAVE I AGREED TO?

YOU'VE AGREED TO NOTHING. YOU WERE CAULDRON FODDER FROM THE MOMENT YOU SET FOOT ON THE ISLAND.

HER MAJESTY DRAWS AS MUCH PLEASURE FROM THE PROCESS AS FROM THE EVENT.

AND THE EVENT IS...?

BLOODY.

SHOULD HAVE SEEN *THAT* COMING.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "AM I CERTAIN"? ARE YOU *DOUBTING* ME!?

NEVER.

YOU'VE BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY THE OTHERS. I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT. THEY ARE NOT EVIL-LYN AND ARE THUS THAT FAR REMOVED FROM PERFECTION.

I, HOWEVER, *AM* EVIL-LYN. I DO *NOT* ERR.

I AM... GRATEFUL FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

YOU WILL SEE TO HIS IMMEDIATE EXECUTION?

I WILL DO NOTHING OF THE KIND. BOTH OF THEM WILL BE SACRIFICED TO THE CAULDRON.

YOU REALLY SHOULD TRY TO ATTEND. IT IS *QUITE* THE FESTIVE GALA.

I DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD PETITION HER..."MAJESTY" TO CUT PRINCE ADAM'S THROAT AND BE DONE WITH IT?

WHERE IS THE SPECTACLE IN THAT?

BE OF GOOD FAITH, SKELETOR, HE-MAN SHALL DIE.

YOU DO NOT INVOKE THAT NAME! DO YOU *HEAR* ME!? YOU DO *NOT*

DEAD AND GONE. YOU HAVE MY WORD.

THE WORD OF A *MAD*WOMAN!

YOU THOUGHT ENOUGH OF HER TO ENLIST HER TO YOUR CAUSE. A BIT LATE TO BE SECOND-GUESSING YOURSELF.

HER POWERS RIVAL MINE. IT IS BEST THAT SHE IS KEPT...AMUSED. WERE SHE TO PUT HER MIND TO IT, SHE COULD POSE A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE TO ME.

I SEE. AS LONG AS SHE REMAINS IN HER PLACE SHE IS USEFUL?

THAT IS ONE WAY OF PUTTING IT.

WHY DO THEY *ALL* FEEL THE NEED TO COMPLICATE THIS!?

HISTORIES.

HISTORY!?

HISTOR*IES.* HISTORIES OF DEFEAT AND HUMILIATION. EACH OF THEM HAVE REASONS TO HATE THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE. VERY *PERSONAL* REASONS.

YOU ARE NO DIFFERENT. *WE* ARE NO DIFFERENT.

CHOOSE YOUR NEXT WORDS CAREFULLY.

JUST *KILLING* HIM IS NOT ENOUGH. A QUICK DEATH, EVEN AT THEIR HANDS, WOULD BE MOST... UNSATISFACTORY.

VENGEANCE AND VANITY HAVE MORE IN COMMON THAN A FIRST LETTER.

IF YOUR PREFERENCE WAS A QUICK DEATH, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER SERVED PAYING YOUR BROTHERHOOD OF ASSASSINS.

MY PREFERENCE IS *ANY* DEATH AS LONG AS HE *DIES!*

THEN STEP IN. SEE IT DONE.

ABANDON GRAYSKULL? WHEN I AM SO CLOSE TO--

YOU ARE NO CLOSER TO TAPPING THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL THAN YOU WERE WHEN YOU FIRST TOOK YOUR SORCERESS CAPTIVE.

YOU CANNOT LIE TO ME. YOU FEAR THAT IF YOU LEAVE GRAYSKULL YOU MAY BE UNABLE TO RETURN. SHE HAS BEEN TORTURED TO NEAR DEATH AND ***STILL*** YOU FEAR HER.

YOU...DARE! YOU ***DARE*** SPEAK TO ME IN THAT MANNER!?

SHE ***IS***... FORMIDABLE.

SHE IS THE KEY TO THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL.

IS SHE? OR IS THAT WHAT SHE WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE?

THERE IS NO GREATER DECEPTION THAN WILLINGLY SUFFERING FOR A CAUSE THAT DOES NOT EXIST.

IF SUCH IS THE CASE I WILL INCREASE HER SUFFERING ONE HUNDREDFOLD! SHE WILL ***BEG*** ME FOR DEATH!

SPEAKING OF DEATH... I CANNOT HAVE THIS CONVERSATION LEAVE THIS CHAMBER.

FEAR NOT, SERVILE ONE, I WILL MAKE IT QUICK.

YOU. GIRL. WHAT MANNER OF ENCHANTRESS ARE YOU?

DO I LOOK LIKE AN ENCHANTRESS TO YOU?

I HAVE DREAMT OF YOU. THERE HAS NOT BEEN ONE NIGHT THAT YOU HAVE NOT HAUNTED MY SLEEP.

...

ARE YOU MY FATHER?

I THINK HE TOOK THAT WELL, DON'T YOU?

FATHER? *SERIOUSLY?*

HE SEEMED TO THINK SO. I KNOW *I* DO.

SO...WHATEVER'S GOING ON, IT'S NOT JUST US.

APPARENTLY. THE BIG QUESTION IS; WHAT, EXACTLY, *IS* GOING ON?

BY NOW THAT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS.

WE'RE BEING MANIPULATED.

BY THAT BIRD THING'S MASTER?

THAT WOULD BE MY GUESS.

BUT TO WHAT *END!?*

"MAYBE YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR FATHER."

...SEEING HOW WE'RE PROBABLY GOING TO DIE SOON, DO YOU SUPPOSE YOU COULD LIFT THE SILENT TREATMENT? IT WAS A BAD JOKE. I ADMIT IT. I'M SORRY.

DINK!

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A SIGN OF PROGRESS.

DOUBLE DINK!

NOW YOU'RE JUST BEING CRUEL.

APPLAUSE, MY BELOVED SUBJECTS! GREET OUR GUESTS IN A MANNER BEFITTING THEIR FATE!

SHOWER THEM WITH GRATITUDE FOR THEIR SACRIFICE!

"SACRIFICE". OH, YEAH. I LIKE THE SOUND OF *THAT.*

VOLCANO...SACRIFICE... HOW DID WE *NOT* SEE THIS COMING?

YOU SEE? YOU *SEE* HOW MY SUBJECTS HONOR YOU? CAULDRON IS A *GIFT* FREELY GIVEN!

BY YOUR METTLE WILL YOU PROVE YOURSELF WORTHY! ONLY ONE LEAVES THE CAULDRON ALIVE! TO THE DEATH! ONE TO THE CAULDRON, THE OTHER TO *GLORY!*

YOU BUYING ANY OF THIS?

NOT A WORD.

YOU UP TO ENTERTAINING THIS CROWD?

NOT A BIT.

PLAY IT BY EAR?

WE HAVE A CHOICE?

I'M GOING TO SAY... "NO."

LET THE CAULDRON BE LIT!

LET THERE BE *COMBAT!*

WE'LL *FRY* BEFORE WE FIGHT FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT!

WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT FRY--

--INGH!

!!

THPT

OKAY. I GET IT NOW.

GET WHAT?

MAKE IT LOOK GOOD.

MAKE *WHAT* LOOK--

WE STOP FIGHTING, *THEY* START SHOOTING.

THOK

--GOO-HFF?!

BUT YOU'RE WOUNDED!

I NOTICED.

SO, HOW'S THAT WHOLE "PLAYING IT BY EAR" THING COMING ALONG?

THAT'S FOR BEING A SMART-MOUTH.

KLOP

IF WE CAN MANEUVER CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE GUARD, MAYBE I CAN--

GET SHOT BEFORE YOU GOT CLOSE ENOUGH TO DO ANY DAMAGE.

THEN IT BECOMES A *REAL* FIGHT.

YOU'RE *REALLY* GOING TO TRY TO THROW ME INTO THAT--

NO. BUT *YOU'RE* PROBABLY GOING TO TRY TO STOP ME FROM JUMPING.

EXHILARATING, IS IT NOT? AND THE RABBLE DO SO LOVE THE SPECTACLE.

IF SHE DIES, I'LL KILL YOU.

WHAT? WHAT WAS THAT? SPEAK UP, FOOL!

I... I-I... IT WAS NOTHING, MAJESTY. MERELY THINKING...

...OUT LOUD...

THAT'S *NOT* A SOLUTION!

IT WILL SAVE *YOUR* LIFE!

YOU *BELIEVED* HER!?

SLIM HOPE IS BETTER THAN NO HOPE AT ALL!

THAT'S *NOT* YOUR DECISION TO MAKE!

RHGH!

IDIOT BIRD! GET *THEM*, NOT...

...US?

ADAM!

next issue:

The SWORD and the SORCERESS!

DC ENTERTAINMENT™

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KEITH GIFFEN

POP MHAN

PHILIP TAN

HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®

DCCOMICS.COM

FEB 2013

ADAM! NO!

The SWORD and the SORCERESS

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NO...

NYEE-HAA-

HAA-HA-

DO YOU SEE?! DO YOU SEE HER PAIN?! IS IT NOT DELICIOUS?! SHE BELIEVES HIM GONE! SHE THINKS HIM DEAD BY THE CAULDRON'S FLAMES!

FOOLISH GIRL! THE NIGHT IS YOUNG AND WE HAVE NOT BEGUN TO BE ENTERTAINED!

NEITHER OF YOU HAS SHED SO MUCH AS A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD!

ADAM! THE FLAMES... THEY'RE ILLUSIONS?

I'M FINE, THANKS.

ADAM!

NO. THERE WAS HEAT THERE. VERY FAINT, BUT THERE.

KNOW THEN THAT BLOOD FEEDS THE CAULDRON. THE MORE BLOOD SHED, THE MORE SUBSTANTIAL THE CAULDRON'S FLAMES BECOME.

THE LAST COMBATANTS FOUGHT THROUGH MULTIPLE FALLS TILL NEAR DAWN.

AN ENCHANTMENT?

THAT'S MY GUESS. I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING THAT THE LONGER THIS FARCE GOES ON, THE HOTTER THOSE FLAMES WILL GET.

EVIL-LYN'S LOOKING TO SLOW-ROAST US.

GOOD.

GOOD?!

GOOD THAT YOU'RE NOT BUYING INTO HER "WINNER TAKES ALL" LIE.

THERE *ARE* NO WINNERS HERE.

!!

NGH!

ON WITH IT! ON WITH IT! I GROW BORED! YOU DO *NOT* WANT ME TO GROW BORED! IS THAT NOT SO, *EX* MAN-AT-ARMS?

TELL THEM! GO ON! *TELL* THEM!

HER MAJESTY IS *MOST* UNPLEASANT WHEN BORED.

WELL, *THAT* DIDN'T SOUND VERY CONVINCING AT *ALL!*

ANY CHANCE WE CAN BOTH JUMP DOWN AND--

BE BURNED TO CINDERS. ODDS ARE SHE CAN CONTROL THE FLAMES' INTENSITY.

THERE IS AN OPTION, BUT IT'S NOT AN ATTRACTIVE ONE.

GOT TO BE BETTER THAN ONE OF US DYING.

COULD INVOLVE *BOTH* OF US DYING.

OH, *DO* GO ON.

THAT BASIN--

CAULDRON.

--ISN'T SET FLUSH WITH THE CONE.

AWFULLY NARROW.

UH-HUH.

AWFULLY STUPID.

UH-HU... WHA--?

YOU'RE TALKING, AT BEST, A THREE-FOOT GAP. FROM UP HERE THAT TRANSLATES TO A SPLIT SKULL IF YOU GO HEAD FIRST, A FRACTURED LEG IF YOU GO FEET FIRST.

NOT TO MENTION SURVIVING THE PLUNGE DOWN THE CONE IF WE MANAGE TO SQUEAK THROUGH.

ZOAR KNOCKED ME DOWN THERE FOR A REASON.

ZOAR IS AN ILLUSION! IT SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO KNOCK... =SIGH=

YOU SEE? THIS IS WHY I HATE SORCERY.

ARE YOU COMING OR NOT?

I--

ROLL WHEN YOU HIT!

THUD

WHUD

I HATE Y--

-OOOOO

THEY DID *NOT!* THAT'S AGAINST THE RULES! THERE *ARE* NO PROVISIONS FOR ESCAPE!

WELL?! WHAT ARE YOU *STANDING* THERE FOR?! GET THEM! FETCH!

THE FALL, MAJESTY. I DOUBT THEY COULD SURVIVE THAT FALL INTO THE --

=SIGH= AS COMMANDED, MAJESTY.

AS IF YOU COULD HAVE KEPT ME FROM GOING AFTER HER.

I JUST WISH I KNEW *WHY* I FEEL THE NEED TO.

...SEVEN... EIGHT... NINE...

GIVING ME A TEN COUNT?

A HUNDRED. AT TEN I'LL STILL WANT TO KILL YOU.

DO ME A FAVOR, NEXT TIME YOU DECIDE TO TAKE A BLIND LEAP, YOU GO FIRST. I'LL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO WAIT FOR THE "ALL CLEAR" *IF* YOU SURVIVE THE FALL.

FOR THE RECORD, YOU HAD NO IDEA ALL OF THIS WAS DOWN HERE, DID YOU?

NOPE. THE BEST I WAS HOPING FOR WAS AN OUTCROPPING OR TWO THAT WE COULD SNAG ON THE WAY DOWN.

NICE TO KNOW YOU THINK THINGS THROUGH.

YOU'RE WELCOME.

THAT WASN'T A COMPLIMENT.

WHERE DO YOU FIGURE THIS LEADS TO?

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

I WAS AFRAID YOU'D SAY THAT.

CAN YOU READ ANY OF THIS?

NOT A WORD.

PROBABLY THE USUAL DIRE WARNINGS AND THE LIKE.

HOW "ENCOURAGING."

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

YOU WHAT?

YOU HEARD ME THE FIRST TIME.

YOU WHAT?!

I SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED YOUR TWO PERSONS OF INTEREST.

YOU'RE *NOT* GOING TO BLOW THIS UP OUT OF ALL PROPORTION, ARE YOU?

EXACTLY *HOW* DOES ONE GO ABOUT MISPLACING--

THEY BROKE THE RULES OF THE CAULDRON. ESCAPE HAS *NEVER* BEEN AN OPTION.

MIGHT I ASSUME THAT THE GREAT AND MIGHTY EVIL-LYN WILL HAVE THE PRINCE AND HIS CONSORT BACK IN CUSTODY SOONER THAN LATER?

I'M NOT AT ALL CERTAIN THAT I CARE FOR YOUR TONE OF VOICE.

ANSWER. THE. QUESTION.

SOONER THAN LATER. YES, YES, FINE, FINE. THERE. ARE YOU SATISFIED NOW?

IT'S ALL THAT SILLY BIRD'S FAULT. HAD IT NOT KNOCKED THE PRINCE FROM THE BEAM--

BIRD?! *WHAT* BIRD?!

TH-BOOM

YOU DARE!

THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY YOU COULD HAVE KNOWN! MY *MIND!* HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN... *WHERE?!*

WHERE IN MY MIND HAVE YOU BEEN HIDING?!

TOOK YOU...LONG... ENOUGH...

NOW YOU FIND YOUR TONGUE, THE BETTER TO MOCK ME?

DID NOT... HIDE. PLAIN SIGHT...I WAS...THERE... IF YOU KNEW WHERE...TO LOOK...

WHERE?!

A PLEASANT... MEMORY. YOU SO...RARELY... REVISIT SUCH... MOMENTS.

SLAM

GUIDING THEM! GUIDING THEM FROM WITHIN *MY MIND!*

DID YOU THINK YOURSELF BEYOND THE REACH OF MY WRATH?! DID YOU THINK YOU WERE THE ONLY OPTION OPEN TO ME?!

YOU THOUGHT WRONG!

SNAK

GRAYSKULL'S POWER WILL BE MINE! I WILL ACCEPT NO LESS! I WILL FIND THE KEY TO THAT POWER EVEN IF IT MEANS RAZING THE CASTLE TO THE GROUND!

I WILL *NOT* BE DENIED!

THIS IS INTERMINABLE.

SH-SH-SH! YOU HEAR THAT?

TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH. WHAT? DID YOU THINK THEY WOULDN'T SEND MEN AFTER US? THEY *HAD* TO KNOW THIS WAS DOWN HERE.

WHATEVER *THIS* IS. SOUNDS LIKE SHE SENT A SMALL ARMY AFTER US.

NUH-UH. HALF-A-DOZEN AT MOST. YOU'RE COUNTING THE ECHOES.

THAT'S HALF A DOZEN TOO MANY. BOTH OF US ARE INJURED.

SUCK IT UP, SOLDIER.

I'M NOT A...

GREAT. A DEAD END.

NOT REALLY. THERE'S A DOOR...OF SORTS.

MIGHT AS WELL BE A DEAD END. OUR CHANCES OF MOVING THAT ARE--

LET'S, AT LEAST, *TRY* BEFORE WE GIVE UP?

OH, NO THANK YOU. I DON'T NEED ANY HELP.

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. I WAS JUST THINKING.

THINKING ABOUT HOW TO AVOID WORK?

UM... ADAM?

NOW THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY.

WAS THERE HEAT?

WHERE I TOUCHED? NO.

WHY'D IT REACT TO YOUR TOUCH?

LET'S HOPE THIS IS MORE "HAPPY TO SEE YOU" THAN "DIE, TRESPASSER."

OKAY. I CAN GET BEHIND THAT.

ARE YOU *SEEING* THIS?

REMIND ME NEVER TO SHAKE HANDS WITH YOU.

ME?! YOU THINK THIS HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH *ME?!*

DIDN'T DO THIS WHEN I TOUCHED...

...IT... GRAYSKULL'S BANE, WHAT HAVE WE STUMBLED INTO?

THE ANSWER. THE ANSWER TO ALL OF OUR QUESTIONS.

NO...

YOU THINK?

...I KNOW.

PLEASE, TELL ME YOU'RE HUNGRY AND THAT WAS YOUR STOMACH.

KRRAH

HUH? WHAT?

!!

MOWRRGHH

ADAM!

C'MON, C'MON, C'MON... A TORCH, A PIECE OF FALLEN STONE... ANYTHING I CAN USE AS A...

...WEAPON!

CHUD

OKAY, I HURT IT. THAT'S A GOOD THING.

AAAAAND I GOT IT MAD. THAT'S A BAD THING.

WHY DO I GET THE FEELING THE BAD THINGS ARE GOING TO OUTWEIGH THE GOOD?

STOP NARRATING! SAVE YOUR BREATH FOR--

RAAR

@#$&%#!!

WELL PUT.

YOU KISS YOUR FATHER WITH THAT MOUTH?

I'LL LET THAT ONE SLIDE.

SEEING HOW YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE EATEN BY A CAT 'N'...

...ALL?!

STEADY, GIRL, LET'S NOT MAKE THIS MORE DIFFICULT THAN--

GET YOUR HANDS *OFF* OF ME!

SHE BE A SQUIRMER! LOOK'A HER GO! MAYBE LET ME HOL' HER? MAYBE YES?

ENOUGH OF THAT! WE'RE NOT HERE TO...

GRAYSKULL'S BANE! WHAT IN CREATION IS *THAT?!*

WHY ARE YOU JUST *STANDING* HERE?! YOU'VE GOT WEAPONS! HELP HIM!

I THINK NOT.

HE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD. EVIL-LYN WILL JUST HAVE TO SETTLE FOR YOU.

NO! YOU SON OF A-- IT'S JUST A BIG CAT!

I WAS ORDERED TO RETRIEVE YOU OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF YOU.

WE'LL COME BACK LATER FOR HIS BONES.

NO! ADAM! ADAMMMM...

YES, YES. PICKED CLEAN THEY WILL BE. PER'APS WE MAKE A CHAIR OUT OF THEM, EH?

N-NICE KITTY?

RRRHH

DIDN'T THINK S-SO.

YOU REALLY... GONNA DO THIS? HNN...HN...LIKE YOU HAVE A CHOICE...

DAMMIT ALL! I WASN'T BROUGHT H-HERE TO DIE!

PLEASE, LET THAT B-BE TRUE!

RAR!!!

STUPID W-W-WAY TO DIE...

WHAM

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I HAVE THE POWER!

NO! NO-NO-NO-NO! HE WASN'T INVITED! HOW DARE HE...

SEA FATHER SAVE US. HE HAS TRIUMPHED.

MAKE HASTE. WE WOULD DO WELL TO BE FAR REMOVED FROM HIS WRATH.

TEELA? WHAT...?

ADAM...

M-MAJESTY?

LATER. I THINK WE'VE GOT A FIGHT ON OUR HANDS... DAD.

...

COME TO ME, THEN, AND BRING YOUR FOOLS WITH YOU. LAST TIME I TOOK YOUR MEMORIES, *THIS* TIME...

...I WILL TAKE YOUR *LIVES*.

Next Issue:

HE-MAN

WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE SAID?

DC ENTERTAINMENT

6

HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™

KEITH
GIFFEN

POP
MHAN

DCCOMICS.COM

MAR 2013

NO, NO! NOT THAT! THAT! OVER THERE!

YES, MAJESTY.

AND YOU, WHY ARE YOU GATHERING UP INCIDENTALS?! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU...?

KTANG

THW UWP

KTASH

CHOKT

...RARE ITEMS! ONLY THE RARE ITEMS!

YES, MAJESTY.

DON'T YOU "YES MAJESTY" ME UNLESS YOU'RE DOING WHAT I TELL YOU TO DO!

NO, MAJESTY.

DID YOU JUST SAY "NO" TO ME?

N...UM... YES, MAJESTY, BUT--

I WON'T HAVE IT! BAD ENOUGH HIS REEMERGENCE HAS FORCED ME TO VACATE MY PRECIOUS TROPICAL PARADISE!

I WILL NOT HAVE MY MOOD FURTHER DARKENED BY BAD MANNERS! IS THAT UNDERSTOOD!?

YEE!

=COUGH= NOW SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE? I SHOULD HAVE YOU FLAYED FOR DARING TO FOUL THE AIR IN MY CHAMBERS!

YOU, THE ONE NOT BURNING, BE QUICK ABOUT IT NOW! I'M NOT ALL THAT CERTAIN HOW LONG MY WARRIORS CAN HOLD HIM...

...BACK.

WELL. THIS IS CERTAINLY UNCOMFORTABLE.

AND BOUND TO GET A LOT *MORE* UNCOMFORTABLE UNLESS YOU ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS TO MY SATISFACTION.

NONSENSE. YOU'VE NEVER STRUCK A WOMAN AND YOU NEVER WILL.

I WILL.

YE-ES... THERE *IS* THAT...

THE POWER!

writing by KEITH GIFFEN
art by POP MHAN
colors by LEE LOUGHRIDGE
letters by SAIDA TEMOFONTE
cover by DAVE WILKINS
editing by MICHAEL McCALISTER

CASTLE GRAYSKULL

...COULD YOU *NOT* KNOW THIS WOULD BE THE OUTCOME?

DO I LOOK A FOOL!? OF COURSE I KNEW THIS WOULD BE THE OUTCOME... *WERE* HE *ALLOWED* TO LIVE!

AND BACK TO THAT AGAIN.

IF YOUR DESIRE FOR HIS DEATH WAS SO GREAT, WHY DID *YOU* NOT HUNT HIM DOWN AND KILL HIM? IT IS NOT AS IF HE MOVED ABOUT COVERTLY.

WHY CHARGE UNDERLINGS WITH A TASK OF SUCH... IMPORT?

WHAT OTHER PURPOSE DO THEY SERVE IF NOT *TO* SERVE!?

AND TAKE THE BLAME SHOULD YOU BE PROVEN WRONG?

THIS CONVERSATION IS *OVER!*

FOR NOW.

FOR ALL TIME!

M-MASTER?

CHOOSE YOUR NEXT WORDS CAREFULLY IF YOU WOULD SEE THE SUN RISE.

THE ADVERSARY... THE HE-MAN, HE WILL COME.

OF *COURSE* HE WILL COME! VEN-GEANCE WILL PROPEL HIM!

THEY *ALL* WILL COME NOW THAT THE SPELL IS UNDONE.

A-ALL!?

THE SO-CALLED MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE. MY NEPHEW WAS THE BEACON.

SO LONG AS THE SPELL LIVED WITHIN HIM, IT WOULD LIVE WITHIN *ALL* OF THEM. IT AMUSED ME THAT HE SHOULD BE THE SOURCE.

WE... WE SHOULD PREPARE!

IS THAT YOUR CONCERN? THAT THE BATTLEMENTS BE MANNED? THAT CASTLE GRAYSKULL BE FORTIFIED FOR THE SIEGE TO COME?

GO THEN. SEE TO IT IF IT WILL BRING YOU COMFORT.

YES, SIRE! THANK YOU, SIRE!

FOR ALL THE GOOD IT WILL DO YOU.

POWER OF GRAYSKULL OR NO, I AM *STILL* SKELETOR, FIRSTBORN OF DARKNESS, LORD OF THE BLEAK DOMINION.

COME THEN, NEPHEW. KNOW OF SKELETOR...KNOW OF *DOOM*.

VERIDAS

... BARELY A SPECK ON THE MAP! D' Y'THINK Y'COULD'A FOUND A *LESS* REMOTE SPOT?

PERHAPS WE SHOULD HAVE HUNG A BANNER? *"THIS WAY TO THE REBELLION"*?

HARDLY A *"REBELLION"* IF WE'RE TAKIN' BACK WHAT'S OURS, IS'T NOW?

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

VERIDAS PUB N' GRUB

GUESS I DO, TEELA. JUST BLOWING OFF SOME STEAM. COUPLE'A MONTHS OF NOT KNOWING YOURSELF FROM A HOLE IN A WALL...THAT'LL SET A MAN OFF MEAN, IT WILL.

I *STILL* THINK THIS IS A BAD IDEA.

WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS.

NOT TO *MY* SATISFACTION. SKELETOR WANTS ME. THE REST OF YOU ARE--

BEHIND YOU ONE HUNDRED PERCENT! YOU'LL NOT BE FACING HIM ALONE!

THAT'S JUST IT. I THINK I *SHOULD.*

HOW WOULD THAT NOT BE PLAYING RIGHT INTO SKELETOR'S HANDS?

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WOULDN'T BE DOING. SKELETOR IS A CREATURE DRIVEN BY EGO. IT'S INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO HIM THAT PEOPLE WOULDN'T REACT TO A GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCE THE SAME WAY HE WOULD.

THE THIEF ALWAYS BELIEVES PEOPLE ARE STEALING FROM HIM.

EXACTLY. AND IF SKELETOR'S AND MY POSITIONS WERE REVERSED...?

HE'D ATTACK YOU WITH EVERYTHING HE'S GOT.

HE'S EXPECTING AN ARMY.

I SAY WE DISAPPOINT HIM.

I SAY IT'S TOO DANGEROUS. WHAT IF HE PUTS ANOTHER WHAMMY ON YOU?

ORKO'S NOT HERE TO BETRAY US THIS TIME.

AS UNACCUSTOMED AS I AM TO SUCH THINGS, I THINK THE ASSEMBLED MASTERS SHOULD EACH HAVE A VOTE IN THE MATTER. ALONE OR AT THE HEAD OF AN ARMY?

A SHOW OF ARMS THEN. WHO AGREES WITH MY SON THAT HE ALONE SHOULD FACE DOWN SKELETOR?

STILL SULKING?

I DON'T SULK.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SPOKEN UP, STOPPED THE VOTE IF YOU WERE THAT DETERMINED TO FOLLOW YOUR OWN COURSE OF ACTION.

THAT'S WHAT SKELETOR WOULD DO.

DON'T YOU MEAN "UNCLE" SKELETOR?

WE'LL BE LEAVING AS SOON AS THE DARK PROVIDES COVER.

OH, FOR THE LOVE OF...DID YOU ***HAVE*** TO TELL ME THAT? COULDN'T YOU HAVE JUST SLINKED OFF AND--

I DON'T SLINK.

I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW, SEEING HOW WE'VE DRAWN BLOOD TOGETHER.

NOW I'VE GOT TO GO ***WITH*** YOU!

NO! NO YOU DON'T!

IT'S THAT OR STAY HERE AND EITHER LIE TO THEM OR GET CASTIGATED BY THEM FOR NOT TELLING ON YOU! DAMMITALL! THIS IS JUST LIKE WHEN WE WERE KIDS!

YOU'D DECIDE TO DO SOMETHING STUPID THEN DRAW ME IN BY TELLING ME ABOUT--

YOU KNOW, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED YOU ANYWAY.

NEXT TIME CAN YOU THINK ABOUT IT ***BEFORE*** YOU START YELLING AT ME?

"WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT?"

SOON. VERY SOON. CAN YOU FEEL IT?

THEY ARE NEAR?

HE. *HE* IS NEAR. HIS RAGE PRECEDES HIM.

HMPH! I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FEEL THAT! I THINK THE TEELA WITCH MAY HAVE SCRAMBLED MY FACILITIES.

SHE WILL DIE BY INCHES, THAT ONE.

AS WILL YOU IF YOU DO NOT CEASE YOUR INCESSANT PRATTLING!

GRAYSKULL IS STONE AND MORTAR AND HISTORY. THERE IS NO POWER HERE EXCEPT FOR THE POWER *HE* CHANNELS THROUGH THE SWORD.

BUT YOU FELT THE POWER WITHIN THE CASTLE'S--

I *FELT* WHAT THE CURSED SORCERESS *WANTED* ME TO FEEL. HER GLAMOUR DIED WITH HER, LEAVING BEHIND ONLY COLD STONE.

MORE FOOL SKELETOR, THEN, FOR HIDING THE SWORD AWAY.

BETTER YOU HAD KEPT IT NEAR TO CHANNEL GRAYSKULL'S POWER ONCE YOU ACCESSED ITS SOURCE.

ADDLED WENCH! HAVE YOU BEEN LISTENING AT *ALL*?!

LET HIM COME. I BROUGHT HIM DOWN ONCE, I CAN DO SO AGAIN. THIS TIME I WILL NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF LETTING HIM LIVE.

BUT, SIRE, THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL. IF ANY WOULD KNOW THE KEY TO UNLOCKING IT, IT WOULD BE--

THE *SWORD* IS THE MEANS BY WHICH THE POWER IS DRAWN TO HIM! TO HIM AND HIM ALONE! IT DOES SO FOR NO OTHER!

OF WHAT USE WOULD SUCH A SWORD BE TO *ME*?!

MPH!

MMF! MF-N!

THE SORCERESS PLANNED HER DECEPTION WELL, LAYERED IT OVER *MY* DECEPTION.

SHE USED MY SPELL TO CONCEAL HERS AND I, SKELETOR, I...

...SAW ONLY WHAT SHE WANTED ME TO SEE BECAUSE IT WAS WHAT I WANTED TO SEE.

WELL PLAYED, TEELA NA. WELL PLAYED.

HE IS HERE! THE HE-MAN RESTORED! HE--

MUST I PULL THE TONGUE FROM YOUR HEAD AS WELL?

MMFF'L MPH'N! MPH!

IT S SKELETOR HE SEEKS. THE OTHER, THE WRETCHED IMP IS WELL BEYOND HIS REACH.

SO BE IT...

...IT ENDS TODAY!

REMEMBER WHEN I TOLD YOU NOT TO WORRY ABOUT ME? THAT I COULD KEEP UP?

I SEEM TO REMEMBER MY TELLING YOU NOT TO COME ALONG!

I TAKE IT BACK!

A BIT LATE FOR THAT, DON'T YOU THINK?

AM I BEING SMUG? I THOUGHT I WAS BEING CHARMING!

CHARMING'S HARD TO PULL OFF WHEN YOU'RE COVERED IN BLOOD THAT'S NOT YOURS!

REFRESH MY MEMORY, HAS THAT SWORD ALWAYS TURNED YOU INTO A SMUG WANK OR IS THIS SOMETHING NEW?

THE POT'S CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK?

ON ME IT'S A FASHION STATEMENT!

I'LL TRY TO KEEP THAT IN MIND!

CRACK

I'LL... UM...WAIT BACK HERE.

GOOD CALL.

DID YOU THINK I WOULD COWER WITHIN THE CASTLE WALLS AMID THE WRETCHED SYCOPHANTS DRAWN TO MY POWER!?

THAT'S WHAT ALL OF THIS HAS BEEN ABOUT. THAT'S WHAT IT'S ***ALWAYS*** BEEN ABOUT. POWER.

THE STOLEN MEMORIES, THE SUBTLE TORMENTS--

SUBTLE TORMENTS?

I THINK OUR DEARLY DEPARTED SORCERESS WOULD DISAGREE WITH THAT ASSESSMENT, NO?

THAT WAS A KILLING BLOW. *FINALLY* YOU SEE ME AS I SEE YOU. THE FOCUS OF YOUR HATRED.

A FOE TO BE *ERADICATED!*

HE STRIKES AT THE MASTER! FORWARD!

FOR SKELETOR!

NO!

HE IS *MINE* TO KILL! MINE ALONE!

RRMAK!

BRRRRR

TOO CLOSE. MY DADDY DIDN'T RAISE NO COLLATERAL DAMAGE.

THEN AGAIN, THE NIGHT *IS* YOUNG...

ONLY *ONE* OF US WALKS AWAY TODAY!

I HAD YOU! YOU WERE COMPLETELY AT MY MERCY! I SHOULD HAVE KILLED YOU THEN, POWER OF GRAYSKULL BE DAMNED!

ONE ON ONE? NO MORE COWERING BEHIND YOUR LACKEYS?

A VICTORY BORN OF DUPLICITY! BASE BETRAYAL!

FAIR OR FOUL, IT MATTERS LITTLE TO ME!

AND *THAT* IS WHY YOU WILL FOREVER BE UNDONE! MIGHT WINS THE WAR BUT HONOR WINS THE PEACE!

ALTRUISTIC BUFFOON! I WILL HEAR NO MORE!

SHTAK

THE SWORD IS THE CONTROL, THE FUNNEL THROUGH WHICH YOU CHANNEL THE POWER THAT IS, AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN, RIGHTFULLY MINE!

WHAT NOW, HE-MAN?

WHAT OF THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL NOW?!

?!

I STILL HAVE THE POWER, UNCLE. THE SWORD IS, AS YOU SAY, THE METHOD THROUGH WHICH THE POWER IS CHANNELED.

YOUR MISTAKE HAS ***ALWAYS*** BEEN YOUR EGO-DRIVEN INSISTENCE THAT THE SWORD CHANNELS THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL ***TO*** ME.

FROM ME, UNCLE. I AM THE HOST. THE SWORD CHANNELS THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL FROM ME. I DON'T JUST *HAVE* THE POWER...

...I AM THE POWER!

NOOOOOOO...

IS HE DEAD?! WILL THE FLAMES KILL HIM?

I...

MOOSH

I'M GOING TO SAY... YES!

LIAR.

LEARN FROM THIS, UNCLE, I'VE NO MORE PITY LEFT TO GIVE YOU.

CHALK!

AHHHH... SO IT ENDS.

TELL ME, SKELETOR, DO YOU FINALLY UNDERSTAND THAT "PRIDE SUNDERED PRECEDES THE FALL?"

A HARD LESSON, HARD TAUGHT, NO?

DON'T... NEED...

PERHAPS *NOW* YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE PAST YOUR SWOLLEN EGO, ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL CAN NEVER BE YOURS BECAUSE THE *POWER CHOOSES THE HOST.*

LIES...

AND *STILL* YOU CLING TO THE MISCONCEPTIONS THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS.

I'M AFRAID DENIAL IS NO LONGER AN OPTION. I WILL NOT ALLOW IT.

WHAT DO...YOU KNOW OF...

I KNOW YOUR HEART AND MIND. I KNOW THE WEEPING ABSCESS THAT THROBS WHERE YOUR SOUL ONCE THRIVED.

I KNOW *YOU,* SKELETOR OF ETERNIA...

...AND T S T ME YOU COME TO KNOW ME AS *MORE* THAN MINION.

...EVEN THOUGH I MUST ADMIT TO HAVING PLAYED THAT PART WELL. I HAVE ***ALWAYS*** PLAYED THAT PART WELL, DON'T YOU THINK?

KNOW THIS, SKELETOR OF ETERNIA, AS MUCH AS I DESIRE IT, IT IS NOT YET TIME FOR YOU TO DIE, NOT THAT YOUR CURSED NEPHEW HAS IT WITHIN HIM TO SEE YOU DEAD.

BUT THERE ARE OTHERS-- THE TEELA WENCH COMES TO MIND--WHO WOULD GUT YOU IN AN INSTANT WITH LITTLE THOUGHT GIVEN TO THE CONSEQUENCES.

AND IT IS ***ALWAYS*** ABOUT CONSEQUENCES... NO?

THUS YOU LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY, AND YOU WILL, SKELETOR, YOU MOST ***DEFINITELY*** WILL.

I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY.

TO BE CONTINUED?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?!

HE-MAN

MAN-AT-ARMS

Kyle Higgins Writer

Pop Mhan Artist

Carrie Strachan Colorist

Carlos M. Mangual Letterer

Cover Art by Pop Mhan and Carrie Strachan

"THE TEMPLE WILL BE HIDDEN BETWEEN THE PEAKS OF THE MYSTIC MOUNTAINS, TO THE NORTH OF POINT DREAD.

"IT WILL BE PROTECTED IN THE CARDINAL DIRECTIONS BY FOUR WARRIORS.

"EACH OF WHOM IS A GIFTED PRACTITIONER OF ELEMENTAL MAGIC. AS THE OTHERS ***INSIDE*** WILL BE, TOO."

"AND WE NEED THEM NOT TO DETECT ME, RIGHT?"

"THAT WOULD BE PREFERABLE, YES."

UHNNN...

SCREEEEEEE

"YOU'RE CONFIDENT YOU CAN MAKE IT INSIDE?"

EEEEEEE--

"OF COURSE. I MAY NOT BE A WIZARD...

SONIC NEURA

"...BUT THERE'S A *REASON* THEY CALL ME MAN-AT-ARMS."

AND THAT REASON IS WHY I NEED YOUR HELP, DUNCAN.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IN THE YEARS BEFORE MY TIME AS SORCERESS, CASTLE GRAYSKULL WAS HOME TO TWO OF THE MOST POWERFUL RELICS IN THE EVERYTHING.

CHRONO.

AND CHAOS.

TOGETHER THEY ALLOWED MASTERY OF THE VERY ***FABRIC*** OF THE EVERYTHING. TOGETHER THEY WERE...

...THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.

THAT IS, UNTIL TWO WARLOCK TRIBES BANDED TOGETHER AND ***STOLE*** THEM FROM THE CASTLE.

BUT IN ***SEPARATING*** THE EYES, ***NEITHER*** TRIBE HAD TRUE MASTERY.

THOSE THAT CONTROLLED CHRONO COULD MOVE THROUGH TIME...BUT WERE LIMITED BY SPACE.

AND THOSE WHO CONTROLLED CHAOS COULD MOVE THROUGH SPACE... BUT WERE LIMITED BY TIME.

FOR CENTURIES THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGN OF EITHER EYE... UNTIL THE TEMPLE OF CHRONO APPEARED IN THE MOUNTAINS YESTERDAY.

I DREAD TO THINK WHAT THE CLAN OF KNOLL HAVE BEEN TRYING TO USE THE EYE OF CHRONO FOR.

WE ***MUST*** GET IT BACK, DUNCAN.

CAN'T YOU JUST USE A SPELL TO SNATCH IT?

NO...THE KNOLL WARLOCKS WHO ***PROTECT*** CHRONO CAN DETECT EVEN THE ***FAINTEST*** OF GRAYSKULL MAGIC.

SO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO GO IN THAT THEY ***CAN'T*** DETECT.

CAN I COUNT ON YOU, DUNCAN?

TNK

CLOAKING-5...
CLOAKING-4...

CLOAKING-3...
CLOAKING-2...

I'M NOT SURE WHAT'S MORE IMPRESSIVE-- THAT YOU *KNOW* WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT...

...OR THAT YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD MAKE IT *OUT* OF HERE *WITH* IT.

RATHER *AUDACIOUS* FOR ONE WHO EXHIBITS NO TRACES OF SORCERY.

AND YET...HERE I AM.

YOUR LITTLE CLOAKING TRICK WAS NICE. BUT YOU STILL HAVE TO *BREATHE.*

WE DETECTED THE CHANGE IN AIR PRESSURE THE SECOND YOU *ENTERED.*

SCREEEEEEEF

HM. *MORE* PARLOR TRICKS.

ZZT-ZZZT

HOW... *UN*IMPRESSIVE.

KOOM

SNAP

FOOM

ARHH!

STRIP AWAY ALL THE TOYS... AND WHAT'S LEFT?

NOTHING.

ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

UGH!

TELL ME-- JUST *HOW* DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET PAST US?

I'M NOT.

DEET

PART 12

LATER.

"YOU ASK FOR ONE EYE OF CHRONO...

...YOU GET ONE EYE OF CHRONO.

DUNCAN... I AM ONCE AGAIN IN YOUR *DEBT.*

AS IS THE CASTLE OF GRAYSKULL.

IT'S NOTHING. REALLY. ALL PART OF THE JOB, SORCERESS.

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOT A DATE WITH A BATH OF ICE.

DUNCAN.

ALLOW US TO *HEAL* YOU. IT'S THE VERY LEAST WE CAN DO.

I APPRECIATE THE OFFER, SORCERESS, BUT YOU KNOW ME--

--I'M NOT A MAN OF *MAGIC.*

END

MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE - BATTLE CAT

HE-MAN

BATTLE CAT

Mike Costa Writer

Jheremy Raapack Artist

Allen Passalaqua Colorist

Carlos M. Mangual Letterer

Cover Art by Jheremy Raapack and Carrie Strachan

WAR.

SALT AND BLOOD.

MEAT.

LONG WHITE CLAWS CLASH.

IT IS A SONG.

IT IS *MY* SONG.

SONG OF THE GREEN TIGOR CLAN.

SMALL CUB.

FIERCE WARRIORS.

POWERFUL FATHER.

SAFE PLACE.

SOFT PLACE.

SAFE.

UNTIL...

...WITHOUT WARNING...

...WITHOUT MERCY...

...EVERYTHING CHANGED.

TERROR.

BLIND TERROR. FOR HOURS. DAYS. *FOREVER.*

CAN'T STOP...

STALKED. TERRORIZED. FOR *DAYS. RUNNING.*

UNTIL...

NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN.

STALKED FOR DAYS BY DEATH.

DEATH CAME FOR ME.

SO MUCH *FEAR.*

FEAR.

BUT THEN, SOMETHING *ELSE.*

THE FACE OF MY FATHER.

GODS GIVE ME *STRENGTH.* MAKE ME *BRAVE.*

HOME IS THE BATTLEFIELD.

NO NEED OF FAMILY, NO NEED OF LOVE.

THE GLORY OF BATTLE! VICTORY!

GROOOONK!

FOES FALLING UNDER CLAWS. BONES CRACKING BETWEEN JAWS.

GROOON--

AFRAID OF NOTHING!

GLORY! STRENGTH!

NEVER WEAK AGAIN!

NEVER WEAK OR SCARED AGAI--

MAN SHOUTING IN YARD. LOUD. LOUD.

SOUNDS OF BATTLE. BAD THINGS. BAD SOUNDS.

DO NOT KNOW THIS MAN.

IF HE DRAWS HIS SHARP STEEL CLAW, I WILL RUN.

FOOTSTEPS BEHIND!

LEGS ARE FROZEN!

CRINGER!

THERE YOU ARE!

SOAP AND WOOL. GOOD SMELLS. SAFE SMELLS.

COME WITH ME, YOU SILLY BOY. LET'S SIT BY THE FIRE.

SOFT TOUCHES. SOFT WORDS.

SOFT PLACE. SAFE PLACE. SAFE PLACE AGAIN.

HOME.

PEACE.

END

HULK-MAN

RANDOR

Mike Costa Writer

Eric Nguyen Artist

Tony Aviña Colorist

Carlos M. Mangual Letterer

Cover Art by Eric Nguyen

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT A MONSTER.

AND THE BETTER MEN WHO CAME AFTER IT.

BEFORE I WAS A KING, I WAS A PRINCE.

HE CAME THIS WAY, MY PRINCE.

BUT I'VE **ALWAYS** BEEN A WARRIOR.

DUNCAN. YOU'VE BEEN MY BEST FRIEND SINCE WE WERE BOYS. AND THESE MEN HAVE SERVED WITH US FOR YEARS THROUGH COUNTLESS BATTLES.

"MY PRINCE" IS FOR COURT. IN OUR HUNTING PARTY, IT'S JUST RANDOR.

OF COURSE MY PR-- RANDOR.

THIS POOR BEAST HAS BEEN INFECTED. LOTHOR, BRING THE CURE I DEVELOPED.

IT'S NOT THE AUROCHS I CARE ABOUT SAVING--IT'S ANYONE THAT MIGHT COME IN CONTACT WITH THE AUROCHS.

A MILITARY LEADER THINKS OF HIS MEN. BUT YOU'LL BE A ***KING***. YOU HAVE TO THINK OF THE ***REALM***.

LET'S HOPE IT'S MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THAT "NEW ENGINE" YOU BUILT FOR THE WIND RAIDER.

SHOULD WE REALLY WASTE A DOSE ON AN AUROCHS? WE HAVE LIMITED SUPPLIES. WE NEED TO CONSERVE FOR OUR ***MEN***.

DUNCAN...

RANDOR--?

WATCH OUT!

THEY'RE COMING FROM ALL SIDES! BACK TO BACK!

I LEARNED MANY THINGS THAT DAY.

THERE IS A PERSPECTIVE EVEN THE MOST SEASONED SOLDIER CAN ACHIEVE, WATCHING HIS MEN CUT DOWN BY THE REANIMATED DEAD.

PHYSICAL STRENGTH ALONE IS NOT POWER.

I LEARNED THAT PROWESS ALONE DOESN'T GUARANTEE SURVIVAL.

THAT SOME ARE DEFENDED BY FATE.

HE FLED...THAT WAY.

ON FOOT...

DUNCAN...

NO. GO. I'LL BE FINE. TOOK THE ANTIDOTE ALREADY.

TAKE WHAT'S LEFT... IT'S NOT MUCH... BUT TAKE IT AND *END* THIS.

NOT HALF A LEAGUE AFTER THAT, THE SWAMP FELL AWAY INTO A DEEP GORGE.

A SMALL VILLAGE SUBSISTED ON THE ROCK ISLAND, FARMING CONDOR EGGS ON THE VERY EDGE OF THE RED WASTE BEHIND THEM.

I KNEW I HAD IT CORNERED.

IT WAS WEAK FROM THE BATTLE.

IT NEEDED TO FEED.

THE MAN HADN'T BEEN FULLY DRAINED.

I GAVE HIM THE LAST DOSE OF DUNCAN'S ANTIDOTE. HE'D LIVE.

DUNCAN WOULD LIVE, TOO. THOUGH HE WAS NEVER AS STRONG AS HE WAS AFTER THAT.

HE BEGAN TO FOCUS MORE AND MORE ON ARMOR AND WEAPONS DESIGNS, TO OUR GREAT BENEFIT.

THE LEECH...DID YOU DO WHAT HAD TO BE DONE?

I DID, MY FRIEND. THE REALM IS SAFE.

THAT WAS THIRTY YEARS AGO. ANOTHER TIME.

A DARKER TIME.

NOW I LOOK AROUND, AND I SEE LIGHT.

I SEE THE YOUTH OF ETERNIA, AND I HOPE I LEFT THEM A BETTER WORLD.

BECAUSE THE PRICE WAS DEAR. DEARER THAN THEY WILL KNOW.

AND I HOPE THE CHOICES I MADE HAVE GIVEN THEM A WORLD THAT WILL NEVER HAVE SUCH COST.

I NEVER TOLD DUNCAN. I NEVER TOLD ANYONE.

BUT AFTER I GAVE OUT THE LAST DOSE OF ANTIDOTE...

ONE WASN'T GOING TO BE ENOUGH.

WAIT HERE. I'LL GET HELP.

BUT WITH DUNCAN INJURED AND THE BOTH OF US LEAGUES AWAY FROM HIS LAB...

IF THEY LEFT THE VILLAGE, THEY WOULD INFECT THE ENTIRE KINGDOM.

DESPITE MY STRENGTH, I COULD NOT HELP THEM. PHYSICAL STRENGTH ALONE IS NOT POWER.

IT IS WILL THAT GRANTS POWER. THE WILL TO DO THE UNTHINKABLE.

THE POWER TO PROTECT THE REALM.

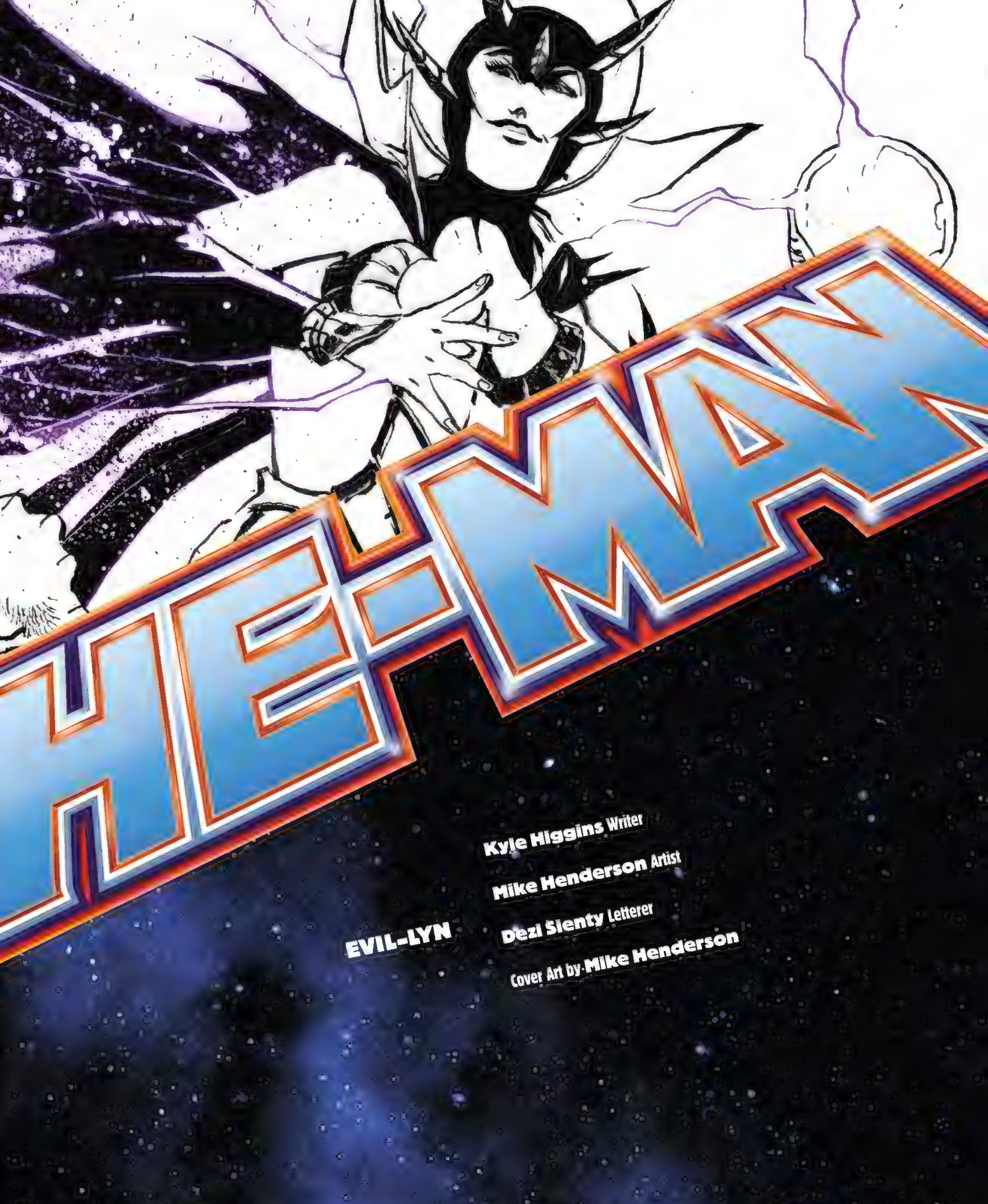
I WAS A PRINCE.

NOW I AM KING. AND THE REALM HAS NEW PROTECTORS. **BETTER** PROTECTORS.

THIS WAS A STORY ABOUT A MONSTER.

AND THE BETTER MEN WHO CAME **AFTER** HIM.

END


EVIL-LYN
Kyle Higgins Writer
Mike Henderson Artist
Dezi Sienty Letterer
Cover Art by Mike Henderson

WHEN PEOPLE THINK OF ETERNOS CITY, THEY THINK OF MONEY.

PRESTIGE.

POWER.

THEY THINK LIVING *HERE* WILL PUT ALL THOSE THINGS AT ARM'S REACH.

AFTER ALL, WHAT BETTER WAY TO FAST TRACK THAN TO LIVE IN THE FAST LANE?

EVEN IF IT'S THE ***SLUMS*** OF THE FAST LANE.

'COURSE, IT GETS BACK TO WHY WE DO ***ANYTHING*** WE DO.

GO TO THE PLACES WE GO.

TAKE THE JOBS WE TAKE.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT MOST PEOPLE ***REALLY*** WANT.

AND ARE EVEN WILLING TO ***LIE*** TO THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO GET.

THEY WANT TO FEEL LIKE THEY ***MATTER.***

NOLAR BLAK.

THAT'S WHO HE LOOKS LIKE, DON'T HE, DAEGAR?
DEAD RINGER.
WELL, 'CEPT NOLAR BLAK WOULDN'T HAVE THE STONES *OR* STUPIDITY TO DRAG HIS POOR SELF INTO A WATERING HOLE FREQUENTED BY HIS *FORMER* BROTHERS OF THE ETERNIAN GUARD.
HE CERTAINLY WOULD *NOT.*
HEY THERE, CHARETH... DAEGAR.
YOU GUYS BEEN STANDIN' HERE THIS WHOLE TIME? I *THOUGHT* I FELT MY SKIN CRAWL...
YOU'VE GOT FIVE SECONDS TO VACATE OR BE VACATED.
LOOK, CHARETH...I DIDN'T KNOW YOU GUYS WERE GONNA BE HERE TONIGHT.
ONE DRINK AND I'M GONE. I SWEAR. WHADDYA SAY...FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE?
UGH!
OOF!
AW, GEEZ... SORRY--REALLY SORRY, LADY. ARE YOU OKAY?
YES, YES...
...I'M *FINE.*
WHOA.
"WHOA"?
I MEAN... WOW. OR, THAT'S NOT TO SAY...
GO AHEAD. KEEP DIGGING.
LISTEN, LET ME START OVER. I FEEL TERRIBLE ABOUT WHAT JUST HAPPENED. WITH THE THEM THROWING ME AND THE ME HITTING YOU AND THE YOU GETTING SOAKED...
HOW CAN I MAKE IT UP TO YOU?

OOP!

IN HINDSIGHT, THAT'S THE MOMENT I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN I WAS IN OVER MY HEAD.

WHAT JUST...

WE'RE EVEN.

AND DEEP DOWN, MAYBE I *DID.*

I'M MORGAN.

BLAK. NOLAR BLAK. BUT EVERYONE CALLS ME BLAK.

BUT I DIDN'T CARE.

...TO TAKE A POSITION IN THE ETERNIAN GUARD?

WELL, WHEN YOU PUT IT *THAT* WAY...

WHAT WAY WOULD YOU *PUT* IT?

I MOVED TO ETERNOS CITY TO BECOME A PRESTIGIOUS MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ETERNIAN GUARD.

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

I TRIED TO PLAY POLITICS AND FAST TRACK. TOOK A STUPID RISK TO GET MY NAME OUT THERE.

I TURNED ON A COUPLE OF CORRUPT GUARDS.

NOW I BUS TABLES.

YOU REGRET DOING IT?

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

WHAT *ABOUT* ME?

WHAT "DREAM" LIFE BROUGHT YOU HERE?

OH, I'M NOT CHASING. I'M RUNNING.

I DON'T FOLLOW.

LET'S JUST SAY...WE *ALL* HAVE THINGS WE REGRET. CHOICES WE'VE MADE.

AND SOMETIMES IT'S NICE...TO *FORGET* ABOUT THOSE CHOICES. TO PRETEND, EVEN FOR A NIGHT...YOU NEVER MADE THEM.

RIGHT, "SERGEANT BLAK?"

YOU SHOULD COME TO ETERNOS MORE OFTEN.

MM. THAT MIGHT BE TRICKY.

HOW TRICKY?

TRICKY.

YOU... YOU'RE...

...AMAZING.

THE NEXT FEW WEEKS MADE IT ALL WORTH IT.

I LIVED MY LIFE.

SHE LIVED HERS.

BREAK

AND ONE NIGHT A WEEK, WE WERE THE PEOPLE WE ***WANTED*** TO BE.

TOGETHER AND HAPPY.

EVEN THOUGH WE BOTH KNEW IT COULD NEVER LAST.

COME WITH ME.

WHAT?

I HAVE SOME MONEY SET ASIDE--NOT MUCH, BUT ENOUGH TO GET US ON THE ROAD. WE CAN RUN--HEAD TO THE MYSTIC MOUNTAINS. AND THEN FROM THERE--

SKELETOR... HE'LL NEVER LET ME GO. I'M ***BOUND*** TO HIM.

BUT YOU'RE A WIZARD. CAN'T YOU BREAK THE BINDING?

IT DOESN'T WORK LIKE THAT. THE ***ONLY*** WAY TO BREAK THE BINDING WOULD BE TO--

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?

YOU'RE SURE I'M WHAT YOU WANT?

MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

MORGAN SPENDS THE REST OF THE NIGHT DESCRIBING A RELIC THAT COULD ALLOW HER TO BREAK THE SPELL.

SHE SAYS IT'S BEEN HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT FOR *YEARS.*

SHE DESCRIBES HOW SHE CAN GET *CLOSE...*

...BUT ONLY SOMEONE *FREE* OF MAGIC CAN ENTER THE ROOM WHERE IT'S HOUSED.

THE SECOND I SEE THE SPACE, I UNDERSTAND *WHY.*

RECREATION

AS YOU REQUESTED.

YOU... *DID* IT.

SO, UH, WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO NOW? AND CAN YOU GET US OUT OF HERE? I'M STARTING TO GET--

WHAT WAS THAT FOR?

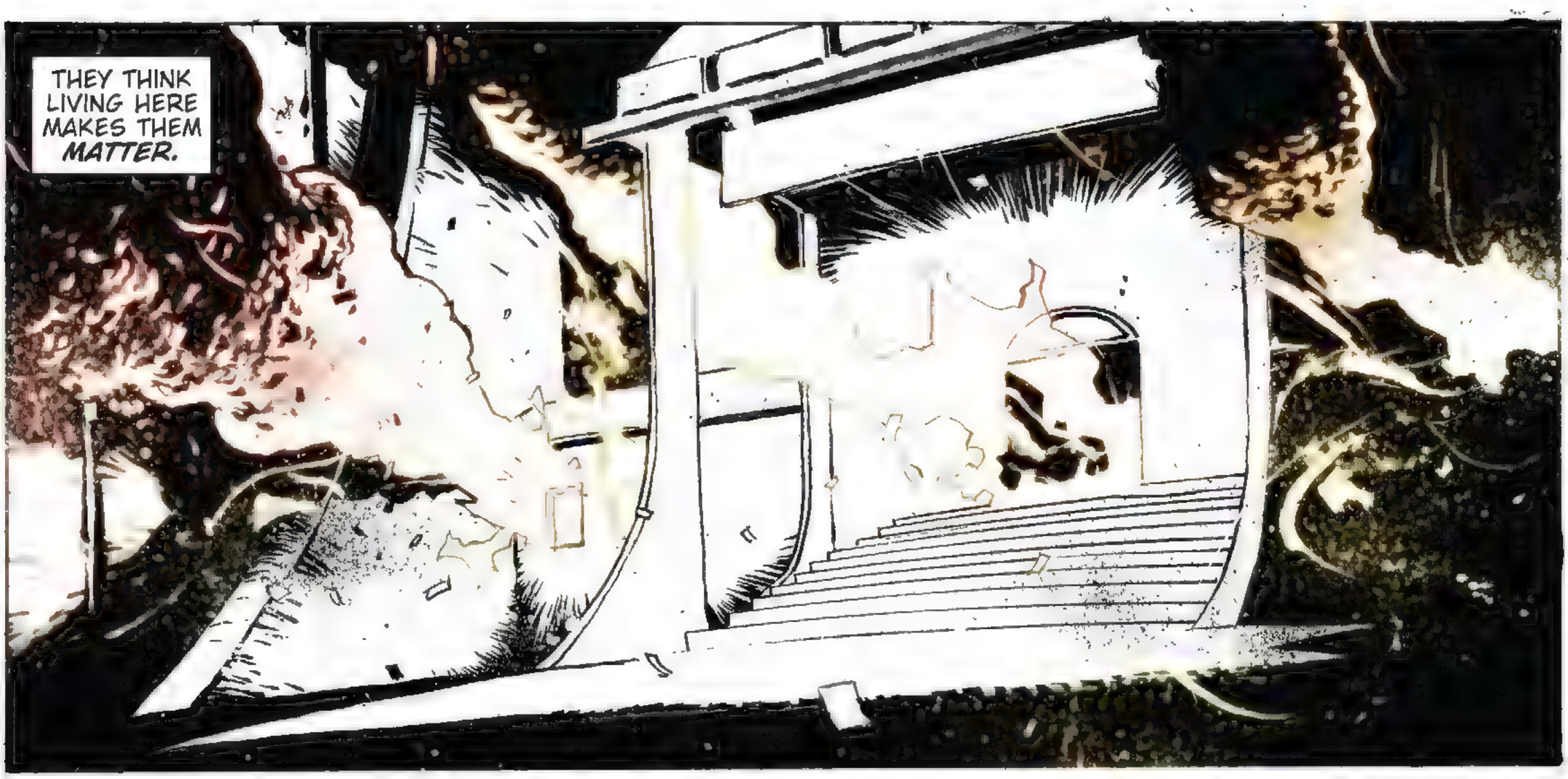
THANK YOU.

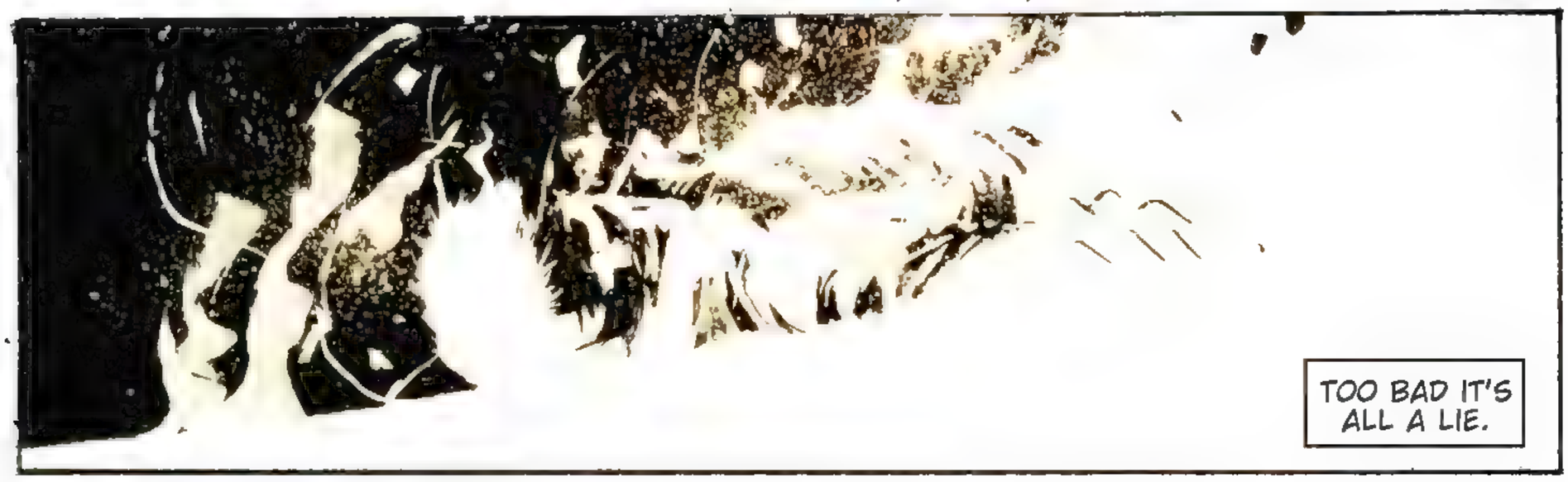
WHAT...WHAT'S *HAPPENING?!*

AHHHHH!!!

AAAUUAUGH!!
GOODBYE, NOLAR.
WHEN MOST PEOPLE THINK OF ETERNOS CITY, THEY THINK OF MONEY.
THEY THINK OF PRESTIGE.

THEY THINK OF POWER.


THEY THINK LIVING HERE MAKES THEM MATTER.


TOO BAD IT'S ALL A LIE.

...YOU RECOVERED THE ITEM WITH NO TROUBLE?

I TRUST...

THE EYE OF CHAOS. ALL ACCORDING TO PLAN.

WHAT ARE THOSE?

OH...

...NOTHING IMPORTANT.

NOTHING IMPORTANT AT ALL.

THE NEW

Jeff Parker Writer

Chris Gugliotti Artist

ORKO

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Dan Hipp

THE WEATHER IS EVEN WORSE CLOSER TO THE CASTLE, BATTLECAT!

IT LOOKS LIKE ALL OF ETERNIA IS BEING AFFECTED...

GRRWL

... AND IT'S COMING FROM CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

HURRY, SKELETOR'S ADVANCE TROOPS ARE ALSO HEADING TO IT!

SORCERESS! WHAT'S HAPPENED, DO YOU NEED HELP?

STAY BACK, HE-MAN!

IF I CAN'T CONTAIN THIS EFFECT, OUR WHOLE REALITY COULD BE DESTROYED!

THE MORGOG GIANT'S SKULL - THAT WE RECOVERED FROM SKELETOR'S LAIR!

YES, IT'S A POWERFUL VESTIGE OF THE FORMING OF OUR WORLD.

WHEN YOU BROUGHT IT BACK FROM THE BATTLE AT HIS FORTRESS, I SAW A CHANCE FOR A MAGICAL TRIUMPH.

"TO HAVE IT IN THE TOP CHAMBER OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL CREATES A POWERFUL FOCAL POINT."

"I ENCHANTED IT TO RE-CHANNEL MYSTIC ENERGY... DEPLETE THE POWER THAT EVIL FORCES CAN USE AND KEEP IT ALL FOR *GOOD*."

STAY AWAY BY ORDER OF GRAYSKULL

"MY PLAN WAS SOUND, IT COULD NOT FAIL..."

"...UNLESS A FOREIGN OBJECT OR CREATURE CORRUPTED THE SPELL!"

HEY, SORCERESS! CHECK OUT WHERE MY NEW QUARTERS ARE GOING TO BE!

ORKO, *NO!* GET OUT OF THERE!

HIS PRESENCE MADE THE SPELL UNSTABLE-

TO SAFETY! IT'S GOING TO-

THAT... FELT LIKE A... PROFOUND CHANGE.

IS EVERYONE WELL?

I SURE AM, SORCERESS!

ORKO...?!?

I'VE NEVER FELT BETTER, MAGICAL MISTRESS!

WOW, I MEAN, LIKE REALLY, ***REALLY*** GREAT! WHATEVER THAT SPELL WAS, I APPROVE!

WELL I DO NOT, ORKO!

DOES ANYONE HEAR A SQUEAKY NOISE?

IT WASN'T JUST ***YOU*** WHO WAS CHANGED!

HOW CAN I DEFEND OUR LAND LIKE THIS? I CAN'T EVEN PICK UP THE SWORD OF POWER!

AND LOOK AT THE SORCERESS!

I CAN'T - SQUAWK!- MANIPULATE THE MYSTIC ENERGIES NOW!

I'M IN BETWEEN FORMS- KWAAK!

BOOM

Grayskull is under siege!

Skeletor's forces have reached our walls, and we're compromised!

I'll check it out through this new window someone just made!

IF YOU THINK THINGS ARE STRANGE IN HERE...

...YOU SHOULD LOOK OUTSIDE!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ETERNIA!? I AM MEANT TO RULE THIS WORLD, AND I WILL NOT HAVE IT LIKE THIS!

DESTROY CASTLE GRAYSKULL! EVERYTHING SMELLS LIKE CANDY!

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY RAINBOWS?

WARRIORS OF GRAYSKULL, TO ARMS!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, SORCERESS. WHAT'S HAPPENED?

YOU INTERFERED WITH THE MAGIC, ORKO. YOUR OWN... *SPECIAL MAGIC* ALTERED A VERY LARGE SPELL. *BRAAWK!*

THE NATURE OF OUR REALITY ITSELF IS IN FLUX, UNSTABLE. *PEEP!*

NOW IT LOOKS LIKE *YOU* ARE OUR GREATEST WARRIOR.

THEN... I BETTER GO DO BATTLE FOR EVERYONE!

PANTHOR, STOP LOOKING CUTE!

CAN'T HELP IT, SKELETOR! I FEEL SUDDENLY... LOVABLE TO THE EXTREME!

UURRP!

"I'M TRYING TO STOP THE SPELL, BUT IT'S SHIFTING PARADIGMS FASTER BY THE SECOND!"

I'LL USE MY BATARANG!

INTERESTING LOOK, MAN-E-FACES

THIS IS BIZARRE. MORE THAN USUAL, I MEAN.

WHY IS MY WEAPONRY... LIKE THIS?!

ZZZZZ!!!

ON GUARD, WARRIORS- THE LANDSCAPE CAN'T BE TRUSTED.

DON'T WORRY, GANG!

OR-MAN WILL DEFEND CASTLE GRAYSKULL!

BOOM

NOW WE'RE ALL UNDER DA SEA...?

TROLLAN FOOL, I DO NOT WANT TO RULE AN AQUATIC REALM!

NGH!

WELL, I DO!

HA! I LOVE ETERNIA LIKE THIS, KEEP IT THIS WAY!

DO NOT CHALLENGE MY AUTHORITY, MER-MAN!

ZZAKT

PPZZK

Get ready for another waaaave!!!

At least we're not underwater anymore... but I can only look side to side.

You know what they say about the physics in Eternia.

If you don't like it, just wait a minute!

I can't properly punch Skeletor like this!

HERO

GRRR

Excuses! I'll defeat you in any version of reality, He-Man!

BOO BOO

BOO BOO

BOO BOO

BOO BOO

ORKO! HE-MAN! LISTEN TO ME!

THE MORGOG SKULL IS BECOMING MORE UNSTABLE!

OUR WHOLE EXISTENCE MAY SOON IMPLODE!

THANKS FOR THE UPDATE, SORCERESS!

BOOWOOWOOWIP

If it all ends, I'm at least going out with the high score!

Not if I eat you before you power up, Trollan!

Orko, there's an exit to the side of you!

BWOOP BWOOP BWEEP

GZZKT

DOES ANYONE SMELL SOMETHING WEIRD?

HEY, THIS VERSION OF REALITY IS WAY BETTER!

ALL REALITIES WORK FOR GREEN TIGERS.

HEE HEE, SEE HOW YOU LIKE A SNOWBALL PACKED WITH ROCKS, HE-MAN!

COFF- IT'S GETTING WORSE, IT MUST BE...

STINKOR!!

EXACTLY WHAT PART OF HIM PUTS OUT THIS SMELL?

AUGH! AUGH!

HAR HAR HARGH! IT'S STINKOR'S WORLD, YOU JUST BREATHE IN IT!

DON'T EVEN HAVE... A NOSE... AND IT HURTS...

AWW, GROSS! EVEN MY SCARF DOESN'T KEEP OUT THE FUMES!

WE'RE GOING TO DIE OF FOUL AIR, AND IT'S ALL MY FAULT!

I THINK YOU CAN PUT IT RIGHT, ORKO!

LEAVE THE BATTLE, COME BACK TO THE TOWER.

UGH- IS THERE FRESH AIR IN THERE? ON THE WAY!

HOW CAN I HELP, OH MIGHTY SHAMANESS?

IT'S VERY DANGEROUS, BUT - YOU MUST DESTROY THE GIANT'S SKULL!

I CAN'T PICK UP HE-MAN'S SWORD OF POWER LIKE THIS.

BETTER DO IT FAST BEFORE I THINK TOO HARD ABOUT IT.

WOW, THIS THING IS COOL.

I - TEMPORARILY- ***HAVE THE POWER!!!***

WHABOO OOMMM

MY POWERS... THEY RETURN TO ME!

WHEW. I ALMOST REALLY MUCKED UP THINGS THIS TIME.

YOU WERE JUST BEING YOURSELF, ORKO.

I WAS REACHING TOO FAR, TRYING TO CHANGE NATURE ITSELF. IT WAS NOT MY RIGHT TO DO SO. LOOK.

BUT THEY'RE ALL STILL FIGHTING.

YES, GOOD AND EVIL IN CONSTANT STRUGGLE. THE WAY OF THE UNIVERSE IS RESTORED.

IT'S A PRETTY GOOD SHOW, ANYWAY.

END

WSM
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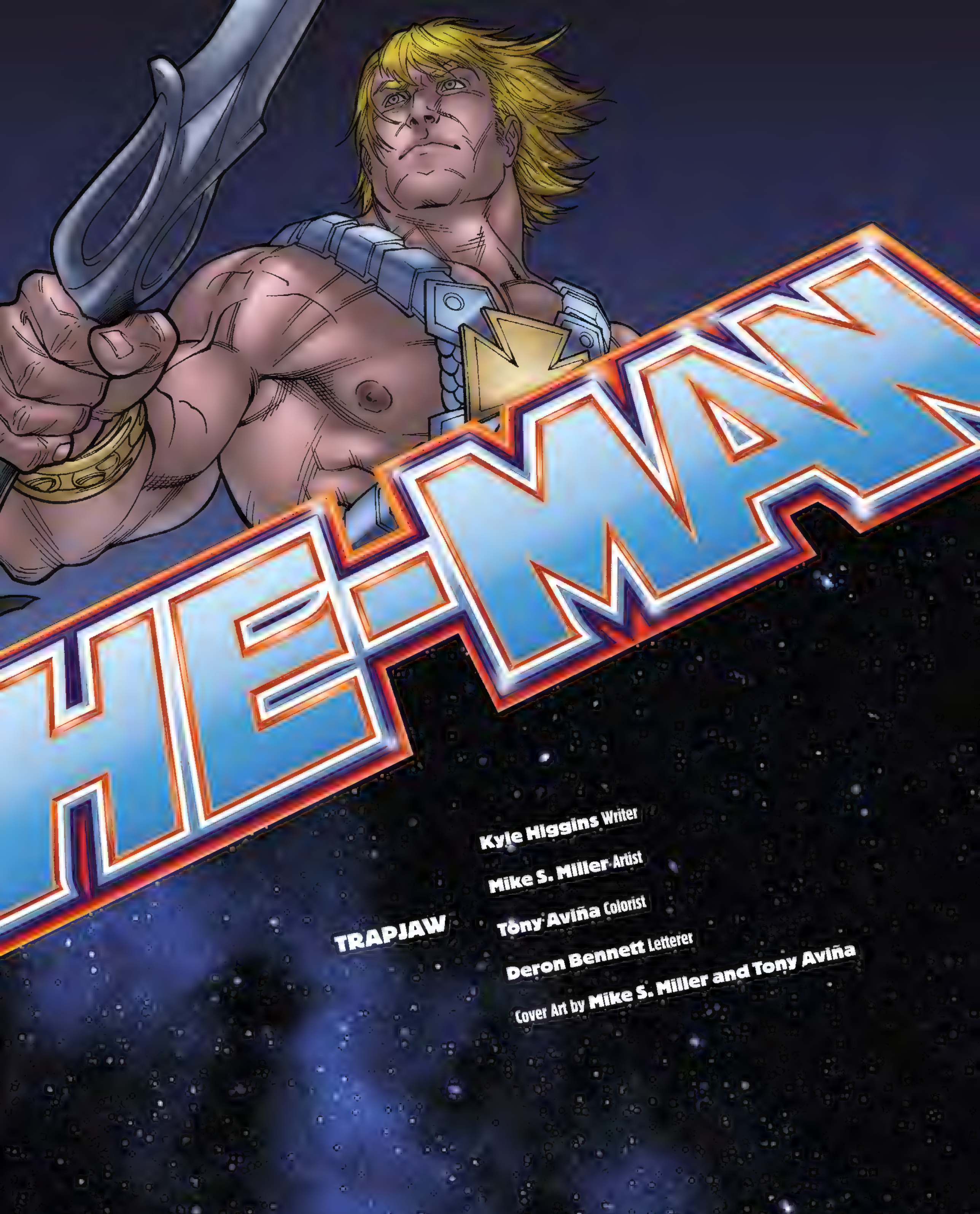

HE-MAN
TRAPJAW
Kyle Higgins Writer
Mike S. Miller Artist
Tony Aviña Colorist
Deron Bennett Letterer
Cover Art by Mike S. Miller and Tony Aviña

IT'S STRANGE TO THINK HOW MUCH HAS CHANGED

HOW COMPLICATED THINGS HAVE BECOME.

AND I'M SAYING WHAT YOU'RE *TELLING* ME, LUNA...

...IS *WORTHLESS.*

KRONIS...

HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO MAKE ***MONEY*** OFF THAT?

A "REPLICA GEM IN THE ETERNOS MUSEUM ISN'T ACTUALLY A REPLICA?" THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SELL ME?

MAYBE YOU CAN'T RIGHT ***NOW***, BUT IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ***LONG*** GAME. WHO'S TO SAY--

IF YOU ***WANT*** THIS ION CANNON, KEEP THAT IN MIND AND GIVE ME SOMETHING I CAN ***SELL***. THIS ***WEEK***.

OR THE CANNON GOES TO SOMEONE ***ELSE***.

OKAY... OKAY... I MAY HAVE SOMETHING ELSE...

AS BIG AS THE MARKET WAS FOR ***TECHNOLOGY***, THE PROFIT MARGIN FOR INFORMATION WAS EVEN ***BIGGER***

YOU JUST HAD TO KNOW WHO WAS BUYING.

IF YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT PULLING A JOB, BLAK... THIS IS THE ONE.

THEIR BOSSES ARE MOVING THE GOLD NEXT WEEK.

YOU'LL SUPPLY THE WEAPONS?

NOLAR BLAK, MIK SIPO, AND JOR KING WERE LOOKING TO GET RICH

WHICH WASN'T EXACTLY UNCOMMON FOR ETERNIAN GUARDS. IT'S NOT LIKE THE PROFESSION PAID

WE'RE IN.

BUT THAT'S WHAT MADE THE NEXT WEEK SO SURPRISING.

CARAVAN'S GETTING CLOSE-- IT'S ALMOST TIME.

WHERE'S NOLAR?

HE'S NOT THERE?

I DON'T *SEE* HIM...

IT'S NOLAR-- HE'S THERE. COME ON-- WE GOTTA GO!

SOMETHING WAS WRONG

WE ALL KNEW IT

WE JUST DIDN'T KNOW *HOW* WRONG

OH, NO...

NO!

ARHH!!

GO GO GO!

GHHHNNNHHHNN...

BY THE TIME I MADE IT BACK TO THE CAVE I COULD BARELY STAND

I'D LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD

IT WAS ALL OVER

I WAS SURE OF IT

GHHNN!!

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I LAID IN THE CAVE

OR HOW LONG I SAT IN IT AFTER

HOURS TURNED INTO DAYS. DAYS INTO WEEKS. WEEKS INTO MONTHS

WHATEVER THE NANITES HAD DONE TO ME, TIME NO LONGER SEEMED TO MATTER.

STILL, I KNEW HOW POWERFUL IT *COULD* BE...

IF USED RIGHT

AND YOU'RE WILLING TO GIVE US THE LOCATION?

I AM. I ONLY HAVE ONE REQUEST.

WHICH IS?

WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT THE EYE... YOU'LL NEED SOMEONE UNTAINTED BY MAGIC TO RETRIEVE IT.

I'D LIKE YOU TO USE SOMEONE SPECIFIC.

WHAT IS HIS NAME?

NOLAR BLAK. AND I WANT HIM TO *SUFFER.*

LYN MANIPULATED HIM FOR WEEKS

FOR MONTHS

UNTIL...

THE TIME WAS *RIGHT.*

BUT WHILE HE-MAN SHOULD HAVE BEEN NEXT...

OTHER COMPLICATIONS AROSE

HOW DID YOU FIND IT?

IN THE MOUNTAINS-- THE TEMPLE JUST *APPEARED.*

AND YOU'RE SURE THEY CAN'T DETECT IT?

THEY CAN'T. JUST LIKE THE EYE OF CHAOS...

...THE EYE OF CHRONO IS *PROTECTED*. EXCEPT...

EXCEPT WHAT?

IF *I* FOUND IT... IT'LL ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WORD GETS TO SKELETOR, DON'T YOU THINK?

AND IF HE HAS *BOTH* EYES OF GRAYSKULL...

HE'LL BE ABLE TO WIPE HE-MAN OFF THE FACE OF ETERNIA.

AND I'LL BE OUT MY *REVENGE*.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

SEND THE SORCERESS A MESSAGE.

YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO DO THAT, KRONIS? I MEAN... IF SKELETOR FINDS OUT YOU'RE PLAYING HIM...

YOU WERE RIGHT BEFORE, LUNA-- IT *IS* ALL ABOUT THE "LONG GAME."

AND THE LONG GAME...

...IS WHAT **TRAPJAW** IS MADE FOR.

HE-MAN

THE BEGINNING:
THE ORIGIN OF HE-MAN

Joshua Hale Fialkov Writer

Ben Oliver Artist

Jose Villarrubia and Kathryn Layno Colorists

Saida Temofonte Letterer

Cover Art by Ben Oliver

GOOD RIDDANCE, NEPHEW.

UNGH...

AND NOW, MY BIRTHRIGHT.

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I... HAVE... THE...

...POWER!

NO! HOW CAN IT BE?

I AM NEXT! I MUST WIELD THE POWER SWORD!

WHO... ARE... YOU?!?

BEFORE...

GRA-KOOOOM!!

WHA?

GRA-KOOOOM!!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF GRAYSKULL...?

MOTHER? FATHER?

FATHER? IS ALL WELL? I HEARD A NOISE...FELT SOMETHING...

YOUR GUARDS ARE GONE--

I...I'M COMING IN.

YOU... ARE SCARING ME. FATHER? MOTHER?

PLEASE--

GODS OF ETERNIA!

KRA-KOOOOM!

WHO ARE YOU? SOME...CREATION OF THE SORCERESS? A COSMIC JOKE FROM ABOVE?

NO...I... AM...

HE-MAN!

AND YOU ARE NOTHING!

NOTHING? I AM SKELETOR.

I AM THE TRUE RULER OF ETERNIA!

I AM THE CONQUEROR OF DIMENSIONS, THE BEAST OF THE SAR.

AND NOW...

I AM THE SLAYER OF HE-MAN.

NEVER!

GAAAHHHHHH!

WHAT MANNER OF WITCHCRAFT--

CRRRASH

HUH?

WHERE ARE YOU, DAMN YOU?

CRRRASH

HEY!

WHAT IS GOING ON?

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

AH, THE YOUNG WHELP MANAGED TO ESCAPE MY POWER.

WHAT--

I MEANT TO SPARE ALL OF YOU TO BE MY SLAVES, BUT...

THIS *GIFT!* TO TAKE THE HEAD OF PRINCE ADAM WILL BE QUITE THE PRIZE.

UNLESS...

...YOU CAN HELP ME FIND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR.

WHY WOULD I DO THAT?

TO SAVE YOUR FAMILY, BOY.

AND BECAUSE YOU'RE A COWARD.

SHOW ME THE SWORD OF KING GRAYSKULL, AND I WILL RESTORE YOUR PARENTS AND LET THEM ALL LIVE.

IF NOT...

PERHAPS I WILL WEAR YOUR SKULL AS A CROWN.

I... CLEARLY HAVE NO CHOICE.

THE WEAPON YOU SEEK...

...IS HERE.

TAKE IT AND GO.

YOU THINK ME A FOOL, CHILD?

THIS IS MERELY AN ANTIQUE, IT'S BEEN ON THIS WALL SINCE I WAS A CHI--

I'D BEEN TOLD YOU NEVER TRAINED--

I... HAVEN'T...

THEN YOU'RE A NATURAL.

OF COURSE, IT'S A SHAME...

YOU REALLY COULD USE A LESSON OR TWO.

NOW, TELL ME WHERE THE POWER SWORD IS, OR DIE LIKE THE FILTH YOUR WRETCHED EARTH MOTHER BIRTHED!

YOU ARE A MONSTER--

YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT.

THAT TAPESTRY...

IT BELONGS TO MY FAMILY, HAS HUNG HERE FOR GENERATIONS--

I KNOW, BOY.

BUT I NEVER REALLY... LOOKED AT IT.

THIS IS THE STORY. THE LEGEND OF KING GRAYSKULL. HOW HE FORGED THE POWER SWORD.

HOW HE FOUGHT OFF THE HORDES OF HORDAK AND ALL FROM THAT DECREPIT CASTLE OF HIS.

AS A BOY I THOUGHT IT A FAIRY STORY--

BUT IT'S NOT. IT'S TRUE.

AND IT HIDES MY TREASURE.

I FELT ITS POWER. I *KNEW* IT WAS HERE.

MY DESTINY.

I HAVE WAITED A *LIFETIME* FOR MY BIRTHRIGHT. THIS IS WHY I HAVE GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD IN MY VEINS.

WHY I SUFFERED HUMILIATION, PAIN--

SUCH EXCRUCIATING--

ANT. SWINE. WASTE OF FLESH.

YOU THINK YOU CAN FOOL *ME?*

YOUR DESTINY, PRINCE.

I... HELP...

RISE, PRINCE ADAM.

WHERE... AM I?

CASTLE GRAYSKULL?

YOU FEEL THIS PLACE IN YOUR BONES, YES.

WHERE ARE YOU?

I

AM

HERE.

I AM THE SORCERESS. I HAVE KEPT WATCH OVER CASTLE GRAYSKULL UNTIL THE DAY YOU CAME--

BUT I DIDN'T COME HERE--I WAS IN THE GREAT HALL AND SKELETOR--

YOU ARE NOT REALLY HERE, PRINCE. RATHER, YOU ARE WHERE YOU NEED TO BE.

YOUR MIND HAS JOURNEYED HERE, AND, SOON, YOUR BODY MUST DO THE SAME. BUT, FOR NOW, YOU MUST ENSURE SKELETOR DOES NOT TAKE THE POWER SWORD.

YOUR POWER SWORD.

MINE? NO. I'M NOT...

I DON'T WANT ANY PART OF THIS.

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE. THIS IS YOUR DESTINY.

WHEN KING GRAYSKULL LEFT THIS MORTAL PLANE, HE WARNED OF A WAR BETWEEN TWO OF HIS OWN BLOOD.

ONE WILL BRING DESTRUCTION, THE OTHER WILL FIGHT IT BACK.

THE END OF THIS WORLD STANDS AT THE GATE, AND ONLY YOU, PRINCE ADAM, SON OF KING RANDOR, DESCENDANT OF KING GRAYSKULL, NEPHEW OF...

PERHAPS YOU AREN'T QUITE READY FOR THAT YET.

I'M NOT READY. I...I CAN'T DO THIS.

YOUR FATHER MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN THAT THIS DAY WOULD COME, BUT, IN HIS BONES, HE WAS ALWAYS SCARED OF IT.

HE LET YOU GROW WEAK AND SCARED. HE LET YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS AND NIGHTS AS YOU PLEASED.

DESTINY IS A LESS KIND PATRIARCH.

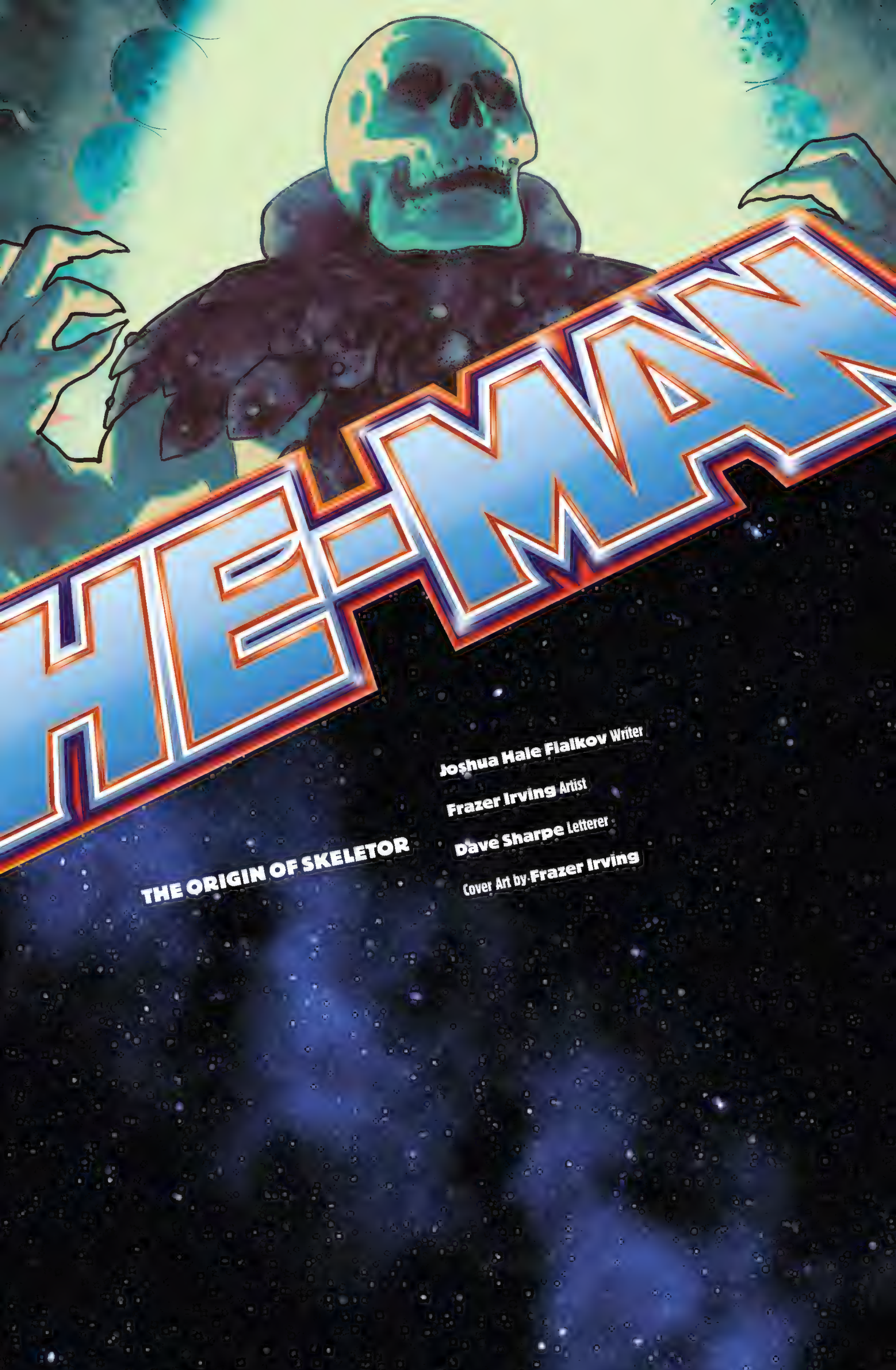
YOU WILL AWAKEN SOON, AND THE SWORD WILL BE WITHIN YOUR REACH, AND YOU WILL SAY THE WORDS, AND YOU WILL NO LONGER BE JUST THE PRINCE.

YOU WILL BE HE-MAN. YOU WILL SAVE OUR WORLD. YOU SHALL DESTROY SKELETOR.

BECAUSE YOU ***CAN.*** YOU ***MUST.***

AND, YOU ***WILL.***

COME TO ME!


HE-MAN
THE ORIGIN OF SKELETOR
Joshua Hale Fialkov Writer
Frazer Irving Artist
Dave Sharpe Letterer
Cover Art by Frazer Irving

AND SO THIS IS THE DEATH OF KELDOR.

FIRST SON OF KING MIRO, BROTHER TO KING RANDOR.

THE SCIENTIST.

THE SCHOLAR.

THE GENERAL.

THE OBVIOUS HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ETERNIA.

THE HALF-BREED BASTARD CHILD OF A KING AND A CREATURE THE WORLD HAS DEEMED SUB-HUMAN.

I FANCY OTHER NAMES FOR MYSELF.

KELDOR THE MIGHTY.

KELDOR THE DESTROYER.

KELDOR THE KING.

INSTEAD IT WILL BE KELDOR THE FALLEN. KELDOR THE WEAK. KELDOR THE LIAR.

KELDOR THE BETRAYER.

I WILL MAKE THIS RIGHT. I WILL FIX MY LEGACY.

THIS PLACE... OUR VILLAGE... KING MIRO'S VILLAGE.

I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE SINCE--

OF COURSE...I'D FORGOTTEN--

MY BROTHER AND I PLAYED HERE, THE PRINCE AND HIS HALF-BREED FREAK.

THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE HORDAK'S MAN FIRST--

WHO--

YOUR DESTINY, PRINCE RANDOR--

NO! LET MY BROTHER FREE!

GAH!

KELDOR! NO!

WE DO NOT KILL!

FATHER WILL INTERROGATE THE PRISONER, AND LEARN FROM WHENCE HE CAME--

I... MUST FIND RANDOR...

I...

MY EYES--

BROTHER?

THIS MEANS THE WORLD TO ME, BROTHER. TO HAVE YOU AS MY CHIEF AID, YOUR WITS AND SKILLS WILL MAKE MY RULE LONG AND HEARTY.

FATHER'S LAST WISH--

WAS FOR ME TO RULE, AND YOU TO BE MY ADVISOR--

BUT I'M OLDER--

I...

I ASKED ON YOUR BEHALF, BROTHER, BUT YOUR GAR BLOOD--

MEANS I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM.

FOR YOU.

FOR ANYONE.

I'LL NEVER FORGET THIS, BROTHER. AS LONG AS I LIVE--

YOU WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME, RANDOR.

NO. I'M NOT READY TO FOLLOW THAT PATH.

NOT YET.

MY DESTINY.

MERTA-PORTA-CARLTAKEAX-HORDAK.

WHO DARES--

AH. KELDOR, SON OF MIRO, BROTHER OF RANDOR.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR... ASCENSION.

THE OLD FOOL MADE RANDOR THE KING, JUST AS YOU SAID HE WOULD, LORD HORDAK.

BUT YOU'RE THE OLDEST, THE SMARTEST, THE STRONGEST--

I'M... IMPURE.

NO YOU'RE NOT.

YOU'RE BETTER THAN THEM. BETTER THAN ANY WHO'VE COME BEFORE.

BUT YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT. THAT'S WHY YOU MADE CONTACT.

I WILL HELP YOU CLAIM WHAT'S YOURS, BOY.

MUST... FIND... RANDOR.

TALK, SWINE! TELL ME WHO SENT YOU!

GAH!

HEH. YOU ALWAYS HAD IT, KID.

IT'S TIME.

WHAT?

IT'S TIME TO ACCEPT YOUR FATE.

I'M THE MASTER OF MY OWN FATE.

THERE IS ONLY ONE MASTER.

THE MISTAKES... I'VE MADE.

WHAT HAVE I DONE...?

WELCOME, KELDOR.

I HAVE WAITED LONG FOR YOU.

WHO--?

IS THIS--?

YES. YOU'VE CROSSED OVER.

I AM DEATH.

NO. I MUST LIVE-- MUST FIND RANDOR--

WHAT COULD A PITIFUL SPECK LIKE YOU EVER DO--?

HOW DARE YOU?

I AM KELDOR THE GREAT!

THE WORLD WILL TREMBLE BEFORE ME!

MUST. FIND. RANDOR.

KELDOR, I SWEAR TO YOU, I TOLD FATHER IT WAS YOU, NOT I--

TAKE THE ACCOLADES, I DON'T NEED THEM--

PLEASE, BROTHER--

FINALLY.

YOU'VE DONE WELL, MY SONS.

RANDOR, YOU'VE ONCE AGAIN SHOWN YOUR EXCELLENCE--

BUT FATHER, KELDOR--

IT'S KIND OF YOU TO SHARE THE COMPLIMENT--

NO, FATHER, YOU DON'T--

MY BOY, YOU'VE SHOWN TODAY WHY YOU DESERVE TO BE KING.

JUST AS KELDOR HAS SHOWN WHY HE SHOULD BE YOUR RIGHT HAND.

NO, FATHER, YOU DON'T--

KELDOR?

BROTHER? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU--?

YOU KNOW.

WE MUST GET YOU TO A HEALER--

IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT, BROTHER...

WHAT HAPPENED? WHY DID YOU BETRAY US?

PLEASE, KELDOR. HELP ME TO SET THIS RIGHT.

I DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.

THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF ETERNIA MUST BE...

BROUGHT FORTH.

HORDAK IS NOT THE RIGHTFUL RULER--

NOT... HORDAK.

ME.

BUT BROTHER, IT COULD NEVER BE! A GAR CAN NEVER--

NOT *A GAR! ME!*

WE SHARE BLOOD! WE SHARE *EVERYTHING!*

WHILE RANDOR RULES, KELDOR SITS TO HIS SIDE!

AND HE PRAYS...FOR HIS FATHER TO NOTICE HIM, FOR WOMEN TO DESIRE HIM, FOR THE PEOPLE TO ACCEPT THE MAN WHO SHOULD BE THEIR KING--

IT'S UNFAIR, I KNOW, BUT YOU WERE TO RULE WITH ME, BY MY SIDE, YES, UNDERNEATH ME, YES, BUT, NOT BECAUSE I'M BETTER, BUT BECAUSE I NEED YOUR HELP TO STAY STANDING UP.

KELDOR, BROTHER, WITHOUT YOU I AM LOST--

THEN, BROTHER, YOU ARE LOST.

YOU WILL NOT DIE, BROTHER.

LOOK UPON MY FACE AND SAY THAT.

SEE THE FACE OF KELDOR.

WE...WILL GET AN ENCHANTRESS--

IT'S TOO LATE, BROTHER.

ALL I CAN ASK IS THAT YOU DON'T LET ME DIE ALONE AND THAT YOU FORGIVE ME.

I FORGIVE YOUR BETRAYAL, I FORGIVE THE WAR YOU'VE CAUSED, I FORGIVE EVERYTHING.

IF ONLY I COULD'VE BEEN A BETTER BROTHER, A BETTER FRIEND TO YOU--

NO. FORGIVE ME FOR THIS.

WHAT--?

THERE IS NO OTHER WAY.

I MUST HAVE YOUR BLOOD. IT IS KEY.

FAREWELL, BROTHER.

WE SHAN'T MEET AGAIN.

NOOOOOOOOO!

TELL HORDAK I'VE DONE IT--

KELDOR THE GREAT IS DEAD!

AND WITH HIS LAST BREATH HE BROUGHT US A WEAPON AGAINST THOSE WHO WANT US DEAD!

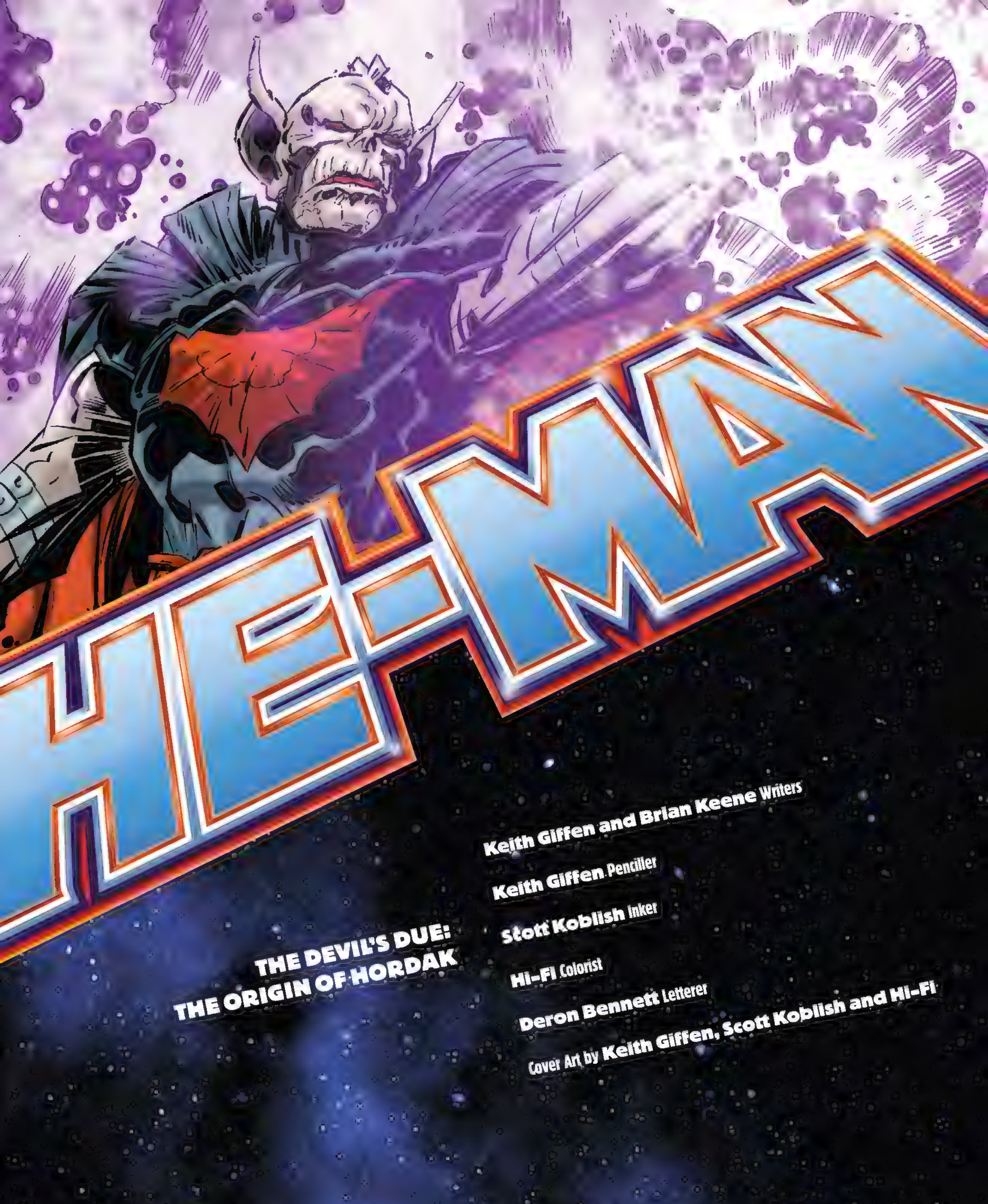
AND IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS GIFT, I GIFT HIM A NEW LIFE.

FAREWELL, KELDOR, SON OF MIRO, BROTHER OF RANDOR THE KING.

RISE, MY APPRENTICE...

RISE, MY...

SKELETOR!


THE DEVIL'S DUE:
THE ORIGIN OF HORDAK
Keith Giffen and Brian Keene Writers
Keith Giffen Penciller
Scott Koblish Inker
Hi-Fi Colorist
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Cover Art by Keith Giffen, Scott Koblish and Hi-Fi

HORDE WORLD

One million years before the birth of Adam...

I'VE FORGOTTEN WHEN I STRUCK MY FIRST BLOW... WHEN I WAS BAPTIZED IN SHOCK AND AWE... WHEN I FIRST BECAME A COSMIC ENFORCER AND WENT TO WAR AGAINST THE HORDE.

CENTURIES... TOO MANY TO COUNT... TOO PAINFUL TO REMEMBER EXCEPT AS DISJOINTED IMAGES OF BLOOD AND BONE AND HORROR... *ALWAYS* HORROR.

THIS... *THIS* WAS TO BE THE FINAL BATTLE. AND IT WAS... CREATOR'S MERCY, IT WAS.

WE WERE OVER ONE MILLION STRONG.

WE WERE DECIMATED...

...AS WERE THEY.

APOCALYPSE... AN ORCHESTRATED APOCALYPSE.

HORDAK... HE INVITED THIS... BROUGHT THIS DOWN ON HIS OWN. WE WERE BUT THE MEANS... HOW COULD WE HAVE BEEN SO EASILY LED TO THIS?

OUR INTELLIGENCE WAS FLAWED... FATALLY FLAWED YET...

IT WAS WHAT WE WANTED TO BELIEVE... WHAT WE ***NEEDED*** TO BELIEVE.

CENTURIES OF WARFARE... IT WAS ALL WE KNEW.

AND WE KNEW IT WELL. WE HAD... LONG AGO FORGOTTEN HOW TO MAKE PEACE.

WE WERE OVER A MILLION STRONG...

EACH A GREATER FOOL THAN THE ONE BEFORE. NOT ONE SEEING THE TRUE APOCALYPSE, THE DIVINE REVELATION... THAT YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW!

MUTUAL GENOCIDE. NO... NOT GENOCIDE... NOT YET. HORDAK... THE BEAST STILL LIVES...

... I STILL LIVE.

CURSE ME TO THE SEVEN HELLS... I *STILL* LIVE!

TSSHHHHHH

Z-ZODAC. COSMIC ENFORCER: 097-427-09. SECOND... SECOND PLATOON OUT OF OVERKILL BATTALION 657.

RESPOND.

P-PLEASE RESPOND.

ANYONE...

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

NO. THE HORDE MAY BE NO MORE, BUT THE BEAST... HORDAK...

I CAN *FEEL* ITS ESSENCE, STILL VITAL... STILL STRONG.

RHETORICAL. ONE LOOK AT THE DEVASTATION SURROUNDING ME, IT'S PRETTY DAMN EVIDENT WHAT WE'VE DONE...

... THE VERY THING WE'VE BEEN *TRYING* TO DO EVER SINCE THE BEAST FIRST DREW BLOOD.

INTOLERABLE.

SO MANY PROPHECIES, SO MANY FAR SEERS CLAIMING TO KNOW THE WAYS OF DESTINY. DID *ANY* FORESEE THIS?

COULD *ANY* HAVE FORESEEN THIS AND STILL BE CALLED SANE?

S.H.I.E.L.D.-TOOMB

H-HNGH!

THRICE DAMNED FOOL! DID YOU THINK IT BLIND LUCK OR CREATOR'S BENEVOLENCE THAT *YOU* SURVIVED!?

YOU AND YOU ALONE!?

H-HORDAK...

IT WAS HORDAK'S WILL AND HORDAK'S WILL ALONE THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS MOMENT!

WHO PROVOKED THIS WAR!? WHO WHISPERED OF A HORDE RIVEN BY WEAKNESS AND FEAR TO YOU AND YOURS WHILE YOU SLEPT!?

NO! WE'VE PSI-BARRIERS! OUR MINDS ARE CLOSED TO YOUR VILE -

AND SO I LET YOU BELIEVE. I'VE *AMBITIONS*, ENFORCER!

AMBITIONS THAT DO *NOT* INCLUDE YOU NOR YOUR ILK!

AND WHAT OF YOUR OWN?! MILLIONS OF HORDE... DEAD!

NOT DEAD! TRANSFORMED! HORDE AND ENFORCER ALIKE! FROM ENERGY WERE THEY BORN AS MATTER AND TO ENERGY DO THEY RETURN AFTER DEATH!

THERE ARE SOME WHO CALL THIS ENERGY "SOUL".

I CALL IT "FEAST".

MILLIONS DIED AND I GORGED MYSELF! I TOOK WHAT THEY SO CARELESSLY CAST AWAY... THE ENERGY... THE SOULS... THE RAW ESSENCE OF CREATION...

MINE. ALL OF IT... *MINE!*

YOU KNEW WHAT I WAS AND STILL YOU CAME, BOLSTERED BY *MY* LIES, EMBOLDENED BY *MY* DECEPTIONS... ONE MILLION FOOLS.

THEY ROIL WITHIN ME. ALL OF THEM CONSUMED TO SERVE *MY* AMBITIONS.

COME TO ME ZODAC! THE FINAL PROPHECY AWAITS.

MMM!

FINAL PROPHECY...

"THERE WILL COME A DAY WHEN THE OLD GODS SHALL PASS FROM THE REALM...

... AND THE AVATAR OF ALL THAT IS GOOD SHALL DO BATTLE WITH THE AVATAR OF ALL THAT IS EVIL; AND SO WILL THE FATE OF THE UNIVERSE BE CAST."

MADNESS. HORDAK HAS LET HIS MONSTROUS HUBRIS LEAD HIM INTO MADNESS.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, THERE IS STILL UNFINISHED BUSINESS BETWEEN US. MAD OR NO, THE BEAST MUST PERISH.

THE SOULS OF THOSE CONSUMED MUST BE FREED.

IT ENDS. *NOW.*

WHO KNOWS THE BEAST BETTER THAN ZODAC? WHO HAS FOUGHT HIM TO A STAND-STILL COUNTLESS TIMES OVER COUNTLESS MILLENNIA...

NO MORE...

I AM *NOT* MY BROTHER'S KEEPER.

IT ENDS TODAY.

DO YOU SEE, FATHER!? DO YOU SEE WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE SON YOU SPURNED, THE SCION YOU CAST AWAY!?

HE COMES! FILLED TO BRIMMING WITH RIGHTEOUS RAGE HE COMES; VENGEANCE INCARNATE!

AND TELL ME ***SCOURED PATRIARCH,*** DID HE NOT RECOGNIZE YOU IN SUCH A...***DIMINISHED STATE*** OR DID HE ***CHOOSE*** NOT TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU!?

WHOSE FACE WILL HE SEE SHOULD HE BE THE ONE TO *STRIKE THE DEATH BLOW!?* THE *"MUCH BELOVED"* BROTHER OR THE *"MOST HONORED"* FATHER!?

MY ANTICIPATION *BURNS!*

SEE HOW HE PERSEVERES! SEE HOW HE CLINGS TO SCANT HOPE, HOW IT DRIVES HIM FORWARD, HOW IT FORCES HIM TO ME!

HE COMES TO ANOINT ME, FATHER! BY HIS BLOOD SHALL I BE CORONATED MASTER OF ALL...

... MASTER OF THE *UNIVERSE!*

HA HA HA HA HA

HAS THERE EVER BEEN A PLACE SO FOUL AS THIS, THIS LAIR OF THE BEAST....THIS FRIGHT ZONE.

THE AIR ITSELF CLINGS LIKE A PARASITE... THE WHISPERS...

... THE DENIED, FORBIDDEN FROM PARADISE, BARRED FROM DAMNATION. HORDAK'S CHOIR, BOUND TO THIS PLACE, THEIR LAMENTATIONS A WARNING TO ALL WHO SEEK OUT THE BEAST...

... THIS WAY LIES MADNESS.

SKREEEEEEEEEE

LEECH!

RR-RUN!

THWASH!

SHRIEKING ABOMINATION! WHAT CHARNEL PIT DID YOU COWER IN THAT YOU LIVE WHILE YOUR HORDE BRETHREN LIE DEAD!?

SHAK!

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH, DARK SPAWN!?

DO YOU HOPE TO PETITION YOUR MASTER'S FORGIVENESS BY BRINGING ME BEFORE HIM AS A BLEAK OFFERING!?

FOOL AND *TWICE* A FOOL!

THWA-BOOM

HORDAK HAS CLAIMED ME AS HIS. YOU ARE BUT AN UNPLEASANT DIVERSION.

A DIVERSION THAT SHOULD NOT LEAVE ME FEELING THIS DRAINED. DOES THE BEAST SEEK TO TIP THE SCALES BY WAY OF DARK MAGICKS?

OR IS IT THE FETID MIASMA THAT ENVELOPES THIS FOULED LAIR? IT PULLS AT ONE'S VERY SOUL...

NO HOPE... NO HOPE...

LIES!

WHERE THERE IS LIFE THERE WILL ALWAYS BE HOPE!

AND WHAT OF HORDAK!? DOES HORDAK NOT LIVE!? DOES HORDAK TRAFFIC IN HOPE!?

FASTER, BROTHER! I GROW IMPATIENT! I WOULD SEE THIS ENDED!

HNGH!

ZZZAK

ENDED... YES. *FINALLY* ENDED...

PROFANE LIGHT... THE ESSENCE OF CORRUPTION. HE IS WITHIN...

ARCH FOE, DARK DISCIPLE, BLASPHEMOUS SCOURGE...

...BROTHER.

BLOOD TO BLOOD! AS IT WAS MEANT TO BE! AS IT WAS FORETOLD!

"AND THE AVATAR OF ALL THAT IS GOOD SHALL DO BATTLE WITH THE AVATAR OF ALL THAT IS EVIL; AND SO WILL THE FATE OF THE UNIVERSE BE CAST..."

IN MY IMAGE, BROTHER! THE UNIVERSE SHALL BE REMOLDED IN *MY* IMAGE!

A *GOD!?* IS THAT WHAT YOUR MONSTROUS EGO HAS LED YOU TO? DELUSIONS OF GODHOOD!?

SHRAK-T!

NOT A GOD... *THE* GOD!

FRAKT

MADNESS...

DIVINE MADNESS, BROTHER!

MINE IS THE POWER OF THE MILLIONS SACRIFICED TO MY GLORY!

LIVES GIVEN THAT I SHOULD KNOW THIS MOMENT!

NO WEAPON CAN HARM ME!

KRUNCH

THAT IT WAS *YOU* WHO LED THEM TO MY DARK ALTAR... YOU OF *ALL* BEINGS WHO BROUGHT THEM TO ME, EACH BOUND TO YOU BY TRUST, EACH DOOMED BY THAT SAME TRUST...

SKOOM!

TELL ME, ZODAC, HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW *YOU* WERE MY HIGH PRIEST!?

NO...

THAT WERE IT NOT FOR YOU, THIS MOMENT MIGHT NEVER HAVE COME!? THAT YOU WERE...

INDISPENSABLE!

LIES... ALL L-LIES...

THWOOM!

YOU WERE ALWAYS THE IMPETUOUS ONE. THE FIRST TO ACT, THE LAST TO REPENT.

KR-RRNCH

SO CERTAIN OF YOURSELF... SO DEDICATED TO YOUR IDEALS... SO EASILY MANIPULATED.

EVERY DEFEAT I SUFFERED AT YOUR HANDS, HOWEVER IGNOMINOUS, I LEARNED FROM. EVERY DEFEAT WAS A STEPPING STONE TO THIS VERY MOMENT!

AND WHAT DID YOUR, SO CALLED, VICTORIES TEACH YOU? ARROGANCE. OVERCONFIDENCE. DISDAIN.

YOU. LEARNED. NOTHING.

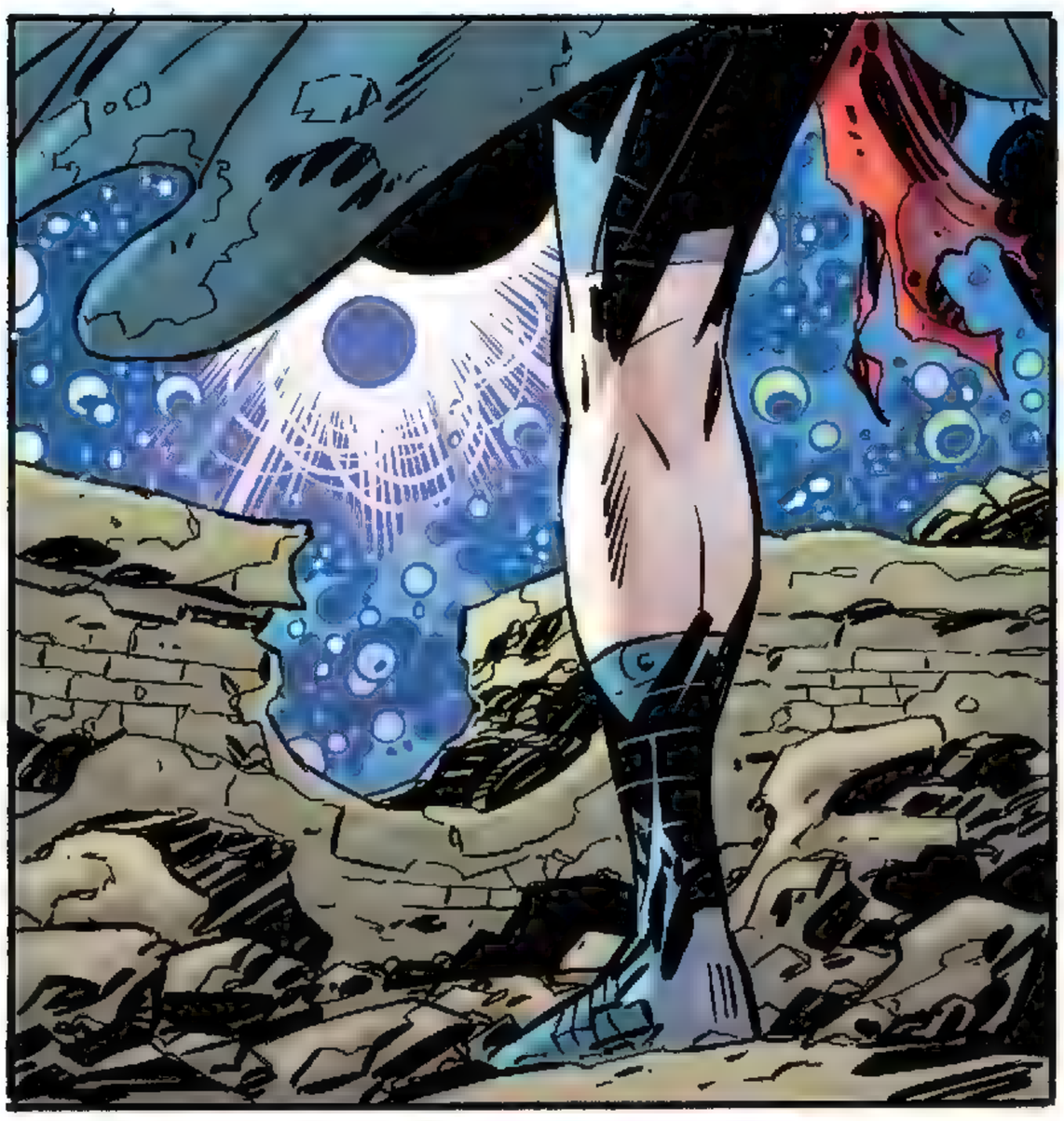
YOU FOUGHT A HORDAK WHO NO LONGER EXISTED! YOU FOUGHT THE HORDAK OF OUR YOUTH AND NEVER ONCE STOPPED TO CONSIDER HOW IT COULD BE THAT THE FALLACIES OF YOUTH WERE CARRIED OVER INTO ADULTHOOD.

ALL A SHAM, BROTHER. ALL IN SERVICE TO *THIS* GLORIOUS MOMENT.

JOIN ME.

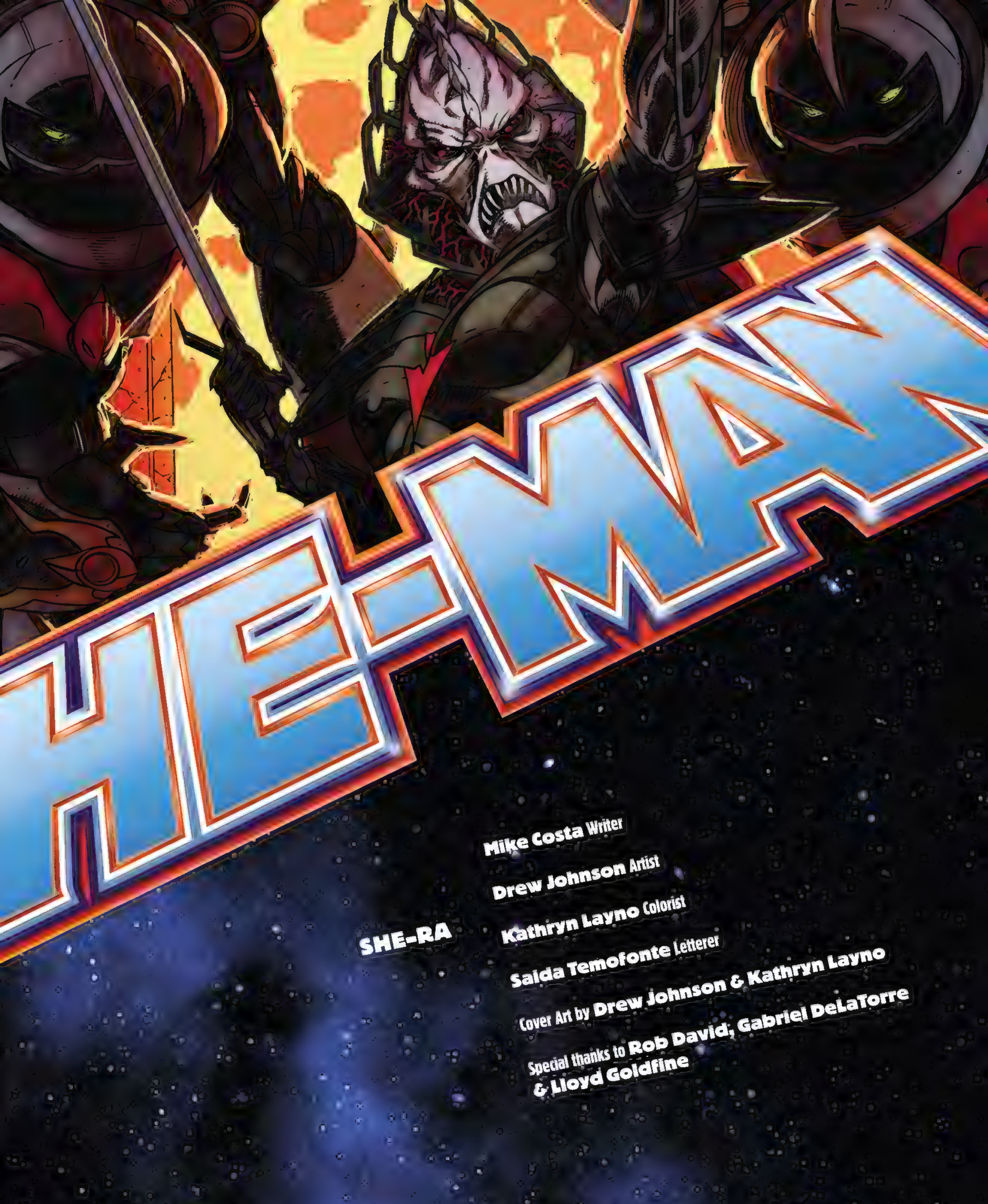
RE-REJECT YOU... I R-REJECT...

I EXPECTED NO LESS.



IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS HORDAK...

LET THE REST OF HORDAK'S TESTAMENT BE WRIT IN BLOOD!
BY THE POWER OF DARKNESS INCARNATE...
I HAVE THE POWER!



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Cover Art by Drew Johnson & Kathryn Layno

Special thanks to Rob David, Gabriel DeLaTorre & Lloyd Goldfine

Etheria.

IN THE DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS.

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST IN THE NAME OF HORDAK!

POWER.

SO FEW HAVE IT.

FEWER STILL KNOW HOW TO USE IT.

WITH THEM, IT IS INVINCIBLE.

DISCIPLINE AND CLARITY. WITHOUT THEM, POWER IS BLIND AND DUMB.

STOP!

POWER MUST BE USED IN SERVICE OF SOMETHING.

MA'AM?

THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT FOR YOU TO SUMMARILY EXECUTE. THEY ARE TO BE TAKEN TO THE SHADOW WEAVER FOR READJUSTMENT.

CONTROL.

THEY FOLLOW MY ORDERS UNQUESTIONING, AS ALWAYS. BUT I CAN SENSE THE CONFUSION. THE WEAK ARE OFTEN PUT TO DEATH SO AS NOT TO WASTE RESOURCES.

AND YET... SOMETHING STAYED MY HAND. SOMETHING VAGUE. FROM THE PAST.

SOMETHING TROUBLING.

BUT I AM **DESPARA.**

AND I AM NOT ONE EASILY TROUBLED.

"THIRTY-SEVEN CAPTURED. FOUR DEAD. WE BELIEVE THIS IS THE LAST REMNANT OF THE GREAT REBELLION IN THIS SECTOR OF ETHERIA."

EXCELLENT WORK, DESPARA. THEY SHALL MAKE CAPABLE WORKERS ONCE THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR PAST SEDITION.

IS THERE... SOMETHING ELSE?

YES. A PERSONAL MATTER.

TAKE OFF YOUR HELMET, CHILD. I WOULD LOOK ON YOUR FACE.

SHADOW WEAVER.

I... HESITATED TODAY.

THAT IS UNLIKE YOU, MY DARLING. YOU ARE THE MOST PERFECTLY LETHAL WEAPON IN THE HORDE'S ARMY. WHAT WAS THE CAUSE?

A CHILD.

YOU'VE NEVER BEEN SENTIMENTAL OVER CHILDREN IN THE PAST.

THIS CHILD TRIGGERED...A MEMORY OF SOME KIND. SOMETHING OLD AND VAGUE. I REMEMBER A WOMAN WAILING. A BABY CRYING. I WAS UNUSUALLY SHAKEN.

AND THERE'S MORE. DREAMS I'VE BEEN HAVING. GREAT, ORANGE WINGS BEATING AND SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING...OF GREAT, ANCIENT POWER.

RED WINGS, YOU MEAN. AND THAT IS NO PUZZLE. THE WINGS OF THE VAMPIRE BAT THAT IS THE HORDE'S SIGIL. AND HORDAK'S POWER IS ETERNAL.

YOUR DREAM IS AN OMEN OF OUR VICTORY AND YOUR GLORY.

I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THE DREAMS ARE CONNECTED TO THE MEMORIES.

I WOULD NOT CONCERN MYSELF WITH MEMORIES. A DIM ECHO FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD IN THE WHELPING CHAMBERS WHERE WOMEN WAIL. BEFORE YOUR TALENTS WERE RECOGNIZED. BEFORE I TOOK YOU AND RAISED YOU.

FOCUS YOUR MIND, MY DARLING. ***IGNORE*** THESE DISTRACTIONS. YOU ARE A ***FORCE CAPTAIN.***

YES, M'LADY.

YOU HEARD THAT, MY LORD?

I HEAR ALL.

SHE BEGINS TO REMEMBER AGAIN. AND THESE DREAMS...

THERE ARE NO DREAMS IN THE HORDE. WHEN SHE IS FULLY RE-COMMITTED, THIS WILL END.

WATCH HER.

TWO WEEKS LATER, I'M IN A DISTANT SECTOR ROUTING ANOTHER OUTPOST OF THE REBELLION. I'M NOT MYSELF. I'M ANGRY. I'M CONFUSED.

I'M DISTRACTED. IT'S **NOT** THE WHELPING CHAMBERS I REMEMBER. IT'S A SOFTER PLACE. A GENTLE PLACE.

A PLACE I WAS **TAKEN** FROM. THERE WAS ANOTHER CHILD THERE.

I THINK I HAVE A BRO--

THE FORCE CAPTAIN WAS CAUGHT UNAWARES. SHE WAS WOUNDED. WE HAD ORDERS TO BRING HER DIRECTLY TO *YOU.*

YOU HAVE DONE WELL. FOR I CAN TAKE THE HURT FROM MY ADOPTED DAUGHTER'S BODY.

BUT FIRST, I MUST TAKE IT FROM HER *MIND.*

WHEN YOUR MIND IS CLEAR, YOUR PATH IS CLEAR.

YOUR ENEMIES CANNOT HARM YOU. YOUR GOALS CANNOT FAIL.

SOME TIME AGO, MY CLARITY FALTERED. I NEARLY FAILED MY LORD HORDAK.

HOW STRANGE THAT SEEMS TO ME NOW. SOME BRIEF FIXATION IN MY MIND. I CANNOT EVEN REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS NOW.

I'VE BEEN HAVING DREAMS RECENTLY.

IN MY DREAMS THERE IS THE BEATING OF WINGS.

MY DREAMS CONFIRM THAT I'M ON THE RIGHT PATH. I KNOW IT.

IN MY DREAMS I KNOW IT. THOSE WINGS WILL CARRY ME TOWARD...SOMETHING. MY DESTINY. I CAN FEEL IT.

POWER.

THE FLASH

DESPERATE TIMES

Keith Giffen Writer

Pop Mhan Artist

Kathryn Layno Colorist

Saida Temofonte Letterer

Cover Art by Ed Benes & Randy Mayor

ETERNOS.

...ALWAYS A FIREBRAND, ALWAYS GETTING INVOLVED IN ***SOME*** MANNER OF ARCANE MADNESS OR OTHER.

REALLY? SHE ALWAYS STRUCK ME AS STOIC, SLIGHTLY...ABOVE IT ALL. NO OFFENSE INTENDED.

NONE TAKEN. PUBLIC FACE, PRIVATE FACE. YOU DIDN'T KNOW HER THAT WELL. NOT WELL ENOUGH TO SEE PAST THE SERENE FACADE.

TEELA TAKES AFTER HER. THE APPLE DID NOT FALL FAR FROM THE TREE, LET ME TELL YOU THAT.

AND YET YOU KEPT IT FROM HER; THE FACT THAT THE SORCERESS WAS HER MOTHER--

AS DID YOU.

THAT WAS ***NOT*** MY TALE TO TELL.

NOR MINE, IF THE SORCERESS WAS TO BE BELIEVED.

YOU'RE HER ***FATHER.***

BECAUSE I ***COULD*** BE.

AND THE SORCERESS COULDN'T? SHE HAD NO DESIRE TO BE TEELA'S MOTHE--

THE DESIRE WAS THERE. HER... RESPONSIBILITIES...THERE WAS NO WAY SHE COULD BE A FIT MOTHER AND SHE KNEW IT.

AH.

BETTER A LOVING MOTHER WHO DIED AT BIRTH THAN A MOTHER WHO--

I GET IT. KIND OF.

ODD LOT, MAGES. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER.

AND IF YOU ***HAD*** KNOWN BETTER.

I NEVER STOPPED LOVING HER.

YOU HID IT WELL.

LIKE I HAD A CHOICE.

FATHER.

DAUGHTER.

ADAM.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO YOUR HAI--

YOU DO *NOT* WANT TO GO THERE.

WELL IT CERTAINLY SUITS YOUR TEMPERAMENT.

SECOND WARNING.

TEELA, YOU CAN'T JUST SHOW UP WITH A HEAD OF RED HAIR AND EXPECT US TO PRETEND WE DON'T NOTICE.

THEN AGAIN...

DON'T GIVE *ME* THAT LOOK. I HAVEN'T SAID A WORD.

YET.

THAT REMINDS ME, THE ROYAL ROOSTER--

THERE'S A ROYAL ROOSTER?

THERE IS NOW.

YOU'LL NEVER SEE IT COMING...

...THAT HER ESSENCE BECOME ONE WITH ZOAR, THE FONT FROM WHICH ALL GRACE FLOWS, THAT SHE MIGHT KNOW OF AND SHARE IN THE POWER AND THE GLORY THAT BINDS ETERNIA TO THE INFINITE.

MAY HER ESSENCE BECOME ONE WITH THE DIVINE PRESENCE; BLESSED CREATOR, BENEFICENT PROVIDER, ETERNAL GUARDIAN.

MAY YOU KNOW PEACE, TEELA NA, EXALTED SEER, SORCERESS EMERITUS OF THE INNER CIRCLE.

THUS ARE WE GATHERED HERE TODAY TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF...

TEELA NA. I NEVER KNEW HER REAL NAME.

NAMES HAVE POWER, OR SO THE MAGES CLAIM. GIVE ME GAS, THE LOT OF THEM.

MAGES?

EVERY LAST ONE.

EVEN...?

DIDN'T LIKE HER WHEN SHE WAS ALIVE. HER BEING DEAD CHANGES NOTH!--

WAITASEC! DID HE SAY "TEELA?"

YOU NAMED ME AFTER HER!?

SH! SH! NOT *HERE!* NOT NOW!

I THINK IT'S AN ANCIENT DIALECT; MEANS "SHE OF THE FLAMING LOCKS" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

CHUK

HK!

IT'S ALL RIGHT. HE'S JUST... OVERCOME WITH GRIEF. YOU KNOW HOW SENSITIVE HE IS, RIGHT ADAM?

GRGL...

THERE, THERE...

HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE HAVE TO --

KING RANDOR *DOES* LOVE A GOOD SPEECH...

THAT LONG?!

THAT LONG?!

WHAT? YOU THOUGHT TH' CROPS'D ALL FALL TO IN NEAT ROWS ALL BY THEMSELVES?

NO. BUT--

GONNA TAKE SOME DOIN' T' SET RIGHT WHAT SKELETOR ORDERED SET WRONG.

BUT--

AIN'T NO "BUTS." YOU LIKE T' EAT, YOU WORK T' GROW. SIMPLE AS THAT.

NOW, WHICH ONE'A YOU'S GONNA RUN THE HARNESS 'N' WHICH IS GONNA WALK POINT FER ROCKS?

WHAT IN TH'--

WHAT IS IT, PA?!

Y'ASKIN' *ME?!*

SFX: ECHO

SFX: FFFSSSKK!

SFX: AAAA

HUH. IF THEY ARE ALL THIS FRAGILE, THIS REALM IS AS GOOD AS OURS.

BOYS! YOU ANSWER YER PA! BOYS!

STATUS?

AS PROJECTED. BLANKET INSERTION. S.O.P.

TWENTY THIRD THROUGH SEVENTY SECOND BATTALIONS HAVE PUNCHED THROUGH AND ARE MOVING TO SECURE THEIR LOCATIONS.

THERE *WILL* BE RESISTANCE.

WHEN ISN'T THERE? DIVINATION CORE HAS FORESEEN THIS CONQUEST. THIS...ETERNIA HAS BEEN MUCH DIMINISHED.

DEATH IS KIN TO VICTORY AS MUCH AS TO DEFEAT.

SEE TO THE BOY. HE SUFFERS NEEDLESSLY.

CHOK

PRIMARY TARGET?

ETERNOS. SEVEN LAND MEASURES DUE EAST.

WE ARE THE CLOSEST INSERTION POINT?

AS ORDERED.

CHOK

PRIMARY FORCE UP THE MIDDLE. LET THEM SEE US COMING. SECONDARY FORCES STAND FLANK UNTIL MY SIGNAL.

WITH ANY LUCK ALL THEY'LL HAVE TO DO IS PICK OFF DESERTERS.

AS ORDERED.

WE'RE IN. NO RESISTANCE REPORTED YET, BUT THE DAY IS YOUNG. ONCE THEY DISCOVER THEY'VE BEEN INVADED--

IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO MOUNT MORE THAN TOKEN RESISTANCE.

AHHH... HOW I *ENVY* YOU, DESPARA. IT HAS BEEN EONS SINCE HORDAK LAST SAT OUT A CONQUEST.

A TESTAMENT TO YOUR FAITH IN ME?

A GIFT, FROM LOVING FATHER TO A DESERVING DAUGHTER.

DO NOT MAKE ME REGRET MY... GENEROSITY.

MY LIFE FOR YOU!

THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING.

YOU ARE WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE SEAT OF POWER?

ETERNOS. WE WILL BEGIN THE ATTACK WITHIN THE HOUR!

DO NOT LET YOUR CONFIDENCE MAKE YOU CARELESS.

THE TECHNOLOGICAL LEVEL HERE IS BARELY--

MAGIC, DESPARA. WHAT USE HAVE THEY FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY WHEN THEY CAN WORK MAGIC?

THEIR MOST POWERFUL MAGE IS NO LONGER AMONG THEM.

NO. THE SKELETAL ONE HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM PLAY. *MUCH* TO OUR ADVANTAGE. BUT THERE IS ANOTHER OF CONCERN; A WARRIOR.

ALL WARRIORS ARE A CONCERN. SUCH IS WAR.

THIS REALM *SHALL* FALL. I WILL PRESENT IT TO YOU AS A GIFT, FROM A LOVING DAUGHTER TO--

YOU WILL PRESENT YOUR CONQUEST BECAUSE FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION! DO NOT THINK YOURSELF ABOVE MY WRATH!

...AS ORDERED.

GRAYSKULL'S GRACE BUT THAT WAS *INTERMINABLE!*

TEELA! PLEASE! A LITTLE RESPECT FOR THE DEAD?

HOW DO WE KNOW SHE'S DEAD?

BEG PARDON?

FOR ALL WE KNOW SHE COULD HAVE JETTISONED HER ESSENCE BEFORE SKELETOR KILLED HER...POSSESSED A DUNGEON RAT OR--

OR A BIRD?

PRECISELY!

I WAS BEING FACETIOUS.

REALLY? HOW ARE THOSE RIBS COMING ALONG?

I DIDN'T SAY IT WAS A *RED*BIRD.

ON THE PLUS SIDE; ONE LESS MAGE. THAT'S GOT TO BE A GOOD THING.

TEELA!

THAT WAS... INTERESTING?

REMINDS ME OF YOU A BIT, DUNCAN.

MY APOLOGIES, DEKKER. WHEN SHE STARTS RUNNING HER MOUTH--

NOW *THAT* WAS UNCALLED FOR.

TEELA!

TEELA! ARE YOU--

#*%@#!!

SHE'S FINE.

WHAT HIT US?!

RIGHT NOW YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS OURS!

BLESSED CREATOR...

ADAM, WHA...?

BADAGE

NO QUARTER! THEY SURRENDER OR THEY *DIE!*

SAVE SOME FOR ME!

IS SHE SERIOUS?!

AS A HEART ATTACK!

DUNCAN! MOST OF THE MASTERS ARE STILL HERE?!

ALL OF THEM ARE!

GET THEM ORGANIZED! LAYERED DEFENSE! FIRST WE HOLD, THEN WE PUSH BACK!

DEKKER! YOU GO WITH HIM!

AND YOU?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! DEFEND THE CITY!

AND IF ETERNOS IS UNDER ATTACK, WHAT OF THE REST OF ETERNIA?!

DON'T THINK ABOUT IT! FOCUS ON THE *NOW!*

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I HAVE THE POWER!

THERE! THE ENERGY SIGNATURE THE EMINENCE WARNED US OF!
WHERE?
THIS IS...THE READING IS OFF THE CHARTS!
WHERE?!
HOW DID YOU...?
KNEW YOU'D BE UP HERE!
YOU NEED ROOM TO DO THAT WHOLE "I HAVE THE POWER" THING. A LOT OF ENERGY COMES INTO PLAY THERE.
SO, WHO ARE WE KILLING?
TAKE YOUR CHOICE.
GRAYSKULL'S BANE, WHO *ARE* THEY?!
THEY ARE YOUR MASTERS.
WHO...?!
WHO CARES!? LET'S--
SHLICK
SERVANTS SHOULD KNOW THEIR PLACE.

SHE IS *NOT* A SERVANT!

THRCK!

MY FATHER WAS RIGHT TO BE CONCERNED.

YOU SHOULD TAKE YOUR LEAD FROM HIM.

DOES THIS FATHER HAVE A NAME? DO YOU?

TALKING TO...HER? *KILL* HER!

WHAT AM I SAYING? BIG LUNK WON'T HIT A WOMAN UNLESS SHE BLEEDS HIM FIRST...

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TAKE *YOUR* LEAD FROM *HER.*

IF IT COMES TO THAT.

IT *HAS* COME...TO THAT! *KILL HER!!*

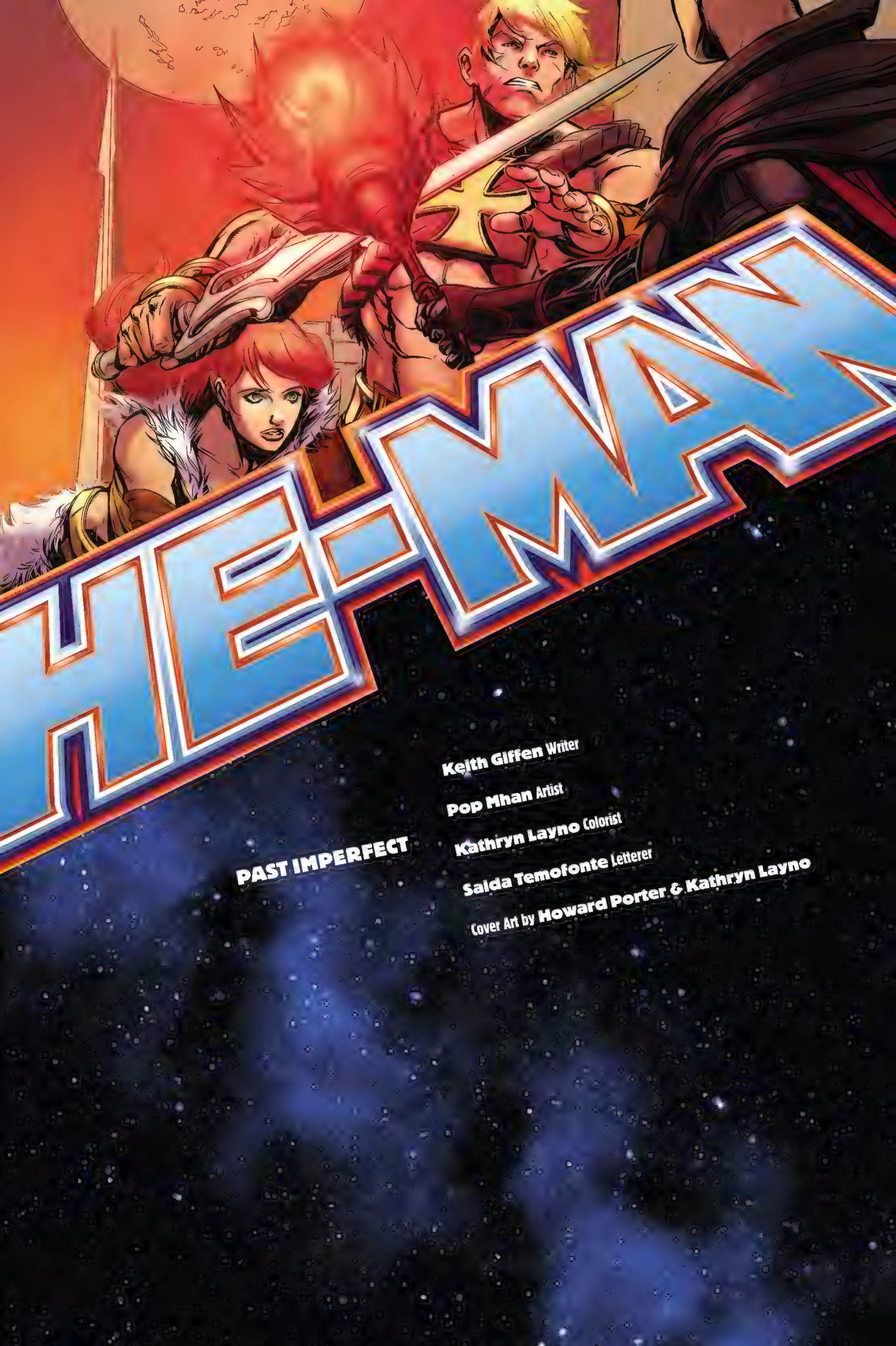
PRETEND SHE'S A GUY!

AH... WE THINK ALIKE, YOU AND I. A PITY WE MEET AT SWORD'S LENGTH. GIVEN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES WE COULD BE FRIENDS.

!!

NO...NOT POSSIBLE... *CAN'T* BE!

ADORA?!



PAST IMPERFECT

Keith Giffen Writer

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Cover Art by Howard Porter & Kathryn Layno

ETERNOS PALACE.

ADORA?!

WHO'S ADORA?

UNTIL NOW, I THOUGHT SHE WAS JUST A FIGMENT OF MY IMAGINATION...

SHE LOOKING IMAGINARY TO YOU?

TEELA...

YOU KNOW HER?!

KNEW HER...ONLY AS A DREAM.

SEE?! "IMAGINARY FRIEND!" WHAT DID I TELL YO--

ENOUGH! I DID NOT COME HERE TO TALK!

SHTUM

APPARENTLY NOT. DARE I ASK?

SLAVES ASK ONLY HOW THEY CAN BETTER SERVE.

CREATOR'S GRACE! WILL YOU GUT HER AND BE DONE WITH IT!?

YOU SHOULD HEED YOUR WOMAN'S ADVICE.

WOMAN? MINE? *TEELA?!*

TWO AGAINST ONE? IS THAT THE WAY IT IS DONE IN THIS REALM?

SHE'S RIGHT. GO SIT IN THE CORNER.

TEELA, NO! SHE'S TOO POWERFUL FOR YOU TO--

I'M PRETENDING SHE'S YOU.

WHAT? DID YOU THINK I'D FORGOTTEN ALL OF THOSE RED HAIR COMMENTS?

ENOUGH!

YOU'VE GOT SPIRIT, GIRL, I'LL GRANT YOU THAT.

A PITY YOUR PROWESS FALLS FAR SHORT OF THAT SPIRIT.

YEEK!

THWOK

...

TEELA!

OH... THAT WAS SMART.

AT LEAST TRY TO LAND ON THEIR GUYS!

...FOR ALL THE GOOD IT WILL DO.

OKAY...*DEEP* BREATHS. STOP REACTING ON A GUT LEVEL AND GET IT TOGETHER!

HEADS UP!

I SHOULD HAVE BLOWN HER FROM HER PERCH ON THE WAY DOWN. IS SHE ALWAYS SO SHRILL?

YOU CARE ENOUGH TO RISK YOUR LIFE FOR HER YET DENY SHE'S YOUR WOMAN.

THAT MAKES YOU EITHER VERY NOBLE OR VERY FOOLISH.

A PITY YOU WON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FIND OUT WHICH!

I THINK WE'VE HEARD MORE THAN ENOUGH FROM YO--

EEYAGH!

SNAK!

FOR ONCE I AGREE WITH HER. *ENOUGH* FROM YOU!

THWAK

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

WHAT? YOU WEREN'T DONE DANCING WITH HER YET?

I WAS WAITING FOR AN OPENING!

IN THAT CASE, YOU'RE WELCOME.

KING RANDOR HAS ORDERED A WITHDRAWAL!

HE *WHAT?!*

THEY'RE KILLING CIVILIANS TO FORCE SURRENDER!

GRAYSKULL! MUSTER AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL!

HEY! WHOA! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE...

#@*&#!!

HUH...HE MUST HAVE CHOSEN THE SHORT STRAW.

AS LONG AS WE FIGHT, INNOCENTS DIE. IS THAT IT?

ALL FOR THE GLORY OF THE EMINENCE! THERE CAN BE NO GREATER HONOR!

MADNESS.

SUICIDE?! OR PERHAPS HOPE THAT I WILL CHOOSE TO BE MERCIFUL?

NEITHER.

RRRA HR

EEYYEEEE!!

QUICKLY, OLD FRIEND!

THWUP

TO GRAYSKULL!

AND WOE TO ANY WHO STAND IN OUR WAY!

MISTRESS!

FETCH A RESTORATION MAGE AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT!

FOR THIS AFFRONT I WILL GRIND HIS BONES TO DUST AND FORCE-FEED HIM TO HIS BEAST!

LAY HANDS ON ME AND YOU DIE WHERE YOU STAND!

THERE *WILL* BE A RECKONING!

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

MEKANECK?! YOU HAVE *GOT* TO BE KIDDING ME!

HALF A DOZEN OF THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE MANAGE TO MAKE IT HERE AND ONE OF THEM IS MEKANECK?!

I *TOLD* YOU THIS WAS A BAD IDEA.

NO, YOU POINTED OUT THAT NOT KEEPING HER IN THE LOOP COULD HAVE DIRE CONSEQUENCES.

GOT *THAT* RIGHT.

TEELA, WHAT HAS MEKANECK EVER DONE TO YOU?

IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL, IT'S JUST... IF WE'RE GOING TO BE FIGHTING OFF WHOEVER THOSE CLOWNS ARE, DID IT HAVE TO BE MEKANECK WHO MAKES IT HERE?

YOU *CAN'T* BE IMPLYING THAT HE SHOULD HAVE--

HE STRETCHES HIS NECK! COULDN'T HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WITH...OH, I DON'T KNOW...A *USEFUL* TALENT!?

NO. I AM NOT HAVING THIS CONVERSATION. EVERY ABLE-BODIED FIGHTER IS--

HE *STRETCHES...* HIS *NECK!*

THAT OUGHT TO SERVE. JUST STAY OFF YOUR FEET FOR A FEW DAYS AND YOU SHOULD BE GOOD AS NEW.

THANKS.

OKAY, SO WHO WERE THOSE GUYS AND HOW BAD IS IT?

HOW ABOUT WE START WITH YOUR IMAGINARY FRIEND?

WHAT DOES AN IMAGINARY FRIEND HAVE TO DO WITH--

HOLD THAT THOUGHT. THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET INTERESTING.

I WAS... OBVIOUSLY I WAS...UM...

IMAGIN-- YOU HAD AN IMAGINARY FRIEND?

I... *THOUGHT* SO.

IF I CAN...CAN I HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION?

SMOOTH DODGE.

BITE ME.

YOU WERE ALL AT ETERNOS. YOU WERE ALL THERE. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. THE EXTENT OF IT, HOWEVER...

...THE FAR SEERS ACCOMPANYING ME CAST A TERRITORIAL WEFT. WHAT THEY SAW WAS... UNBEARABLE.

...ETERNIA HAS FALLEN.

PLEASE. THIS IS DIFFICULT ENOUGH. LISTEN AND LEARN. THE TIME FOR TALK WILL COME SOON ENOUGH.

ATTEND...

SIMULTANEOUS ATTACKS WERE LAUNCHED ON EVERY CITY AND TOWN IN ETERNIA. THE SMALLER VILLAGES HAVE THUS FAR BEEN SPARED. THAT WILL NOT LAST.

THE TECHNOLOGY USED TO MOUNT THE ATTACKS IS ALIEN TO US...INSTANTANEOUS TELEPORTATION IS THE CLOSEST WE CAN COME TO DESCRIBING IT.

A SCIENCE-BASED VARIANT ON OUR OWN SHIFT CONJURIES.

THE LOSS OF LIFE IS...STAGGERING. ENTIRE ARMIES HAVE BEEN DECIMATED, ENTIRE CIVILIAN POPULATIONS EXTERMINATED.

THEY USE CIVILIAN DEATHS TO FORCE SURRENDER. ETERNOS WAS SURRENDERED FOR JUST THAT REASON, AS WAS EVERY MAJOR POPULATION CENTER ON ETERNIA. MANY OF OUR BRETHREN LET THEMSELVES BE TAKEN RATHER THAN ENDANGER THOSE THEY'VE SWORN TO PROTECT.

THE FOE IS *THAT* MERCILESS. THE FOE IS *THAT* RELENTLESS.

DOES THIS FOE HAVE A NAME, IF ONLY SO WE CAN CURSE IT AS WE SEND HIS MINIONS TO WHATEVER HELL WILL HAVE THEM?

...

HORDAK. THE FOE IS HORDAK.

HORDAK?!

THE MYTH?

PREPOSTEROUS!

THEY WERE LED BY A WOMAN, NOT A...A VAMPIRIC CREATURE OF LEGEND!

NOT MYTH NOR LEGEND NOR FAIRY TALE! HORDAK *IS!*

SEEN HIM WITH YOUR OWN EYES, HAVE YOU?

I WAS, WHEN BUT A CHILD, NEAR ABDUCTED BY ONE OF HIS MINIONS.

HE WAS *WHAT?!*

...FORTY-FOURTH THROUGH FIFTY-SECOND BATTALIONS HAVE SEALED OFF COASTAL ACCESS. ETERNIA IS EFFECTIVELY LANDLOCKED.

ENFORCEMENT CELLS ARE ROUNDING UP MAGES, BOTH CONFIRMED AND SUSPECTED. ERADICATION PROTOCOLS ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED...

...AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE HAS BEEN HARROWED TO 47 PERCENT EFFECTIVE.

EXCELLENT. HUNGRY MASSES ARE COMPLIANT MASSES.

RESISTANCE?

ISOLATED POCKETS. *THIS* MIGHT INTEREST YOU.

WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?

A SUBSTANTIAL GATHERING OF ETERNIAN FORCES. THE HOLD IS CALLED CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

GRAYSKULL... AS IN KING GRAYSKULL?

HOW... APPROPRIATE. THEY CHOOSE TO MAKE THEIR FINAL STAND IN THE HOME OF THE ONE WHO SET THESE EVENTS IN MOTION SO LONG AGO.

WE BELIEVE SO.

THERE IS A SENSE OF CLOSURE IN THAT. I APPROVE.

FAR CAST THE LOCATION OF THIS CASTLE GRAYSKULL TO THIRTY-FIRST AND EIGHTY-THIRD OVERKILL BATTALIONS! CONTAIN BUT DO NOT ENGAGE!

DO WE HAVE EYES IN THE SKY?

LIMITED AI REFRACTION LENSES HAVE BEEN NUDGED INTO ORBIT. INTERDIMENSIONAL PASSAGE STRESS WILL KEEP THEM FROM OPTIMUM FOR ANOTHER DAY OR TWO.

DO THEY SEE AT ALL?

THE IMAGES ARE UNCLEAR--

HAVE THEM FOCUS ON THE CASTLE AND ITS PERIMETER. TWO-MILE DIAMETER, FULL CIRCUMFERENCE.

IF IT MOVES I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS!

NO ONE GETS OUT ALIVE! ESPECIALLY NOT THE WARRIOR AND HIS STRUMPET!

MARK THEM AS MINE AND MINE ***ALONE!***

FATHER?

ADAM. SO...DO THEY THINK ME MAD? DELUDED? UNFIT TO SIT UPON THE THRONE?

NOTHING SO DRASTIC.

THEY BELIEVE THEN?

I WOULDN'T GO *THAT* FAR.

THEY KNOW YOU'D NEVER DECEIVE THEM...NOT DELIBERATELY.

"DELIBERATELY" BEING THE OPERATIVE WORD?

THIS LOOK FAMILIAR?

THE MURAL FROM ETERNOS PALACE. GAVE ME MORE NIGHTMARES THAN I CARE TO REMEMBER.

AND NOW HE'S BACK ON ETERNIA? THIS HORDAK?

NO. WE CAN BE GRATEFUL FOR *THAT* MUCH, AT LEAST. GRAYSKULL'S ENCHANTMENT BINDS HIM TO HIS NETHER REALM.

HIS *MINIONS*, HOWEVER...

IT'S ALMOST TOO MUCH TO TAKE IN. A PAN-DIMENSIONAL VAMPIRE, ARMIES THAT ARE MORE MACHINE THAN MAN...

HOW ABOUT A GIANT GREEN CAT THAT YOU CAN RIDE AROUND ON? OR A MAN MADE OF MOSS WHO CAN CONTROL PLANTS? OR--

POINT TAKEN.

WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DEAL WITH THE REALITY WITH WHICH WE ARE PRESENTED. WE HAVE BEEN PRESENTED WITH A NEW ADDITION TO OUR REALITY. OR SHOULD I SAY AN OLD ONE REBORN...

YOU SAID YOU WERE ALMOST TAKEN--

AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN IF KELDOR HADN'T BEEN THERE TO FEND THE CREATURE OFF.

KELDOR? SKELETOR?! SKELETOR SAVED YOU?!

SKELETOR WAS YET TO BE. BUT THAT'S A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY.

THEY'VE SENT AN EMISSARY!

HAD TO BE HER.

YOU'VE MET?

YOU COULD SAY THAT.

YOU PRESUME MUCH, COMING HERE UNBIDDEN, EVEN IF AS A PROJECTIO--

NO. NOT YOU. HIM.

BUT... I AM NOT KING.

I DON'T THINK THAT MATTERS TO HER. HEAR HER OUT.

SPEAK YOUR PIECE.

SIMPLY PUT, SURRENDER AND THEY ALL LIVE. WE ARE THE SUPERIOR FORCE. WE *WILL* PREVAIL.

THEY? AM I TO ASSUME THE OFFER DOESN'T EXTEND TO ME?

WELL CAUGHT. YOU... YOU AND I WILL FIGHT TO THE DEATH..

WILL WE?

SLAVES OBEY THEIR MASTERS. I WILL COMMAND IT OF YOU.

I'M TO BE YOUR SLAVE? TO WHAT DO I OWE SUCH AN "HONOR"?

I HAD ALL HEALED BUT FOR THE ONE. ONLY YOUR BLOOD WILL WASH IT AWAY.

YOUR WRETCHED BEAST WILL BE BROUGHT FORTH AND BUTCHERED. YOUR SURRENDER WILL BE WRIT IN IT'S BLOOD!

SURRENDER OR EVERYONE DIES. THERE WILL BE NO SECOND OFFER. NO BARGAINING FOR THE LIVES OF THOSE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO STAND WITH YOU.

YOU'VE THOUGHT THIS THROUGH.

SURRENDER OR DIE!

OOOOHH... SCARY!

ACTUALLY, THE SCAR BRINGS OUT THE COLOR IN HER EYES.

I WAS JUST THINKING THAT. LOVELY. JUST LOVELY.

I DON'T THINK THEY'RE INTERESTED.

JUST AS WELL. ARROGANT SLAVES DIE SOONER THAN LATER.

YOU HAVE TWELVE HOURS TO MAKE PEACE WITH WHATEVER WRETCHED GODS WILL HAVE YOU!

CHARMING.

PICKED UP ON THAT, DID YOU?

HARD TO MISS.

IMAGINARY FRIEND, EH? I THINK IT'S TIME I HEARD THAT TALE.

NOT MUCH TO TELL.

LET ME BE THE JUDGE OF THAT.

...MARLENA...

HE-MAN

SIEGE!

Keith Giffen Writer

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"I TAKE IT YOU REMEMBER THAT I DIDN'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL?"

"YOU GOT TWO THINGS WRONG. ONE, YOU DIDN'T HAVE *ANY* FRIENDS AND, TWO, YOU WERE NEVER A 'LITTLE GIRL.'"

"YOU WANT TO HEAR THIS OR NOT?"

"I USED TO PREFER HANGING AROUND MY FATHER ANYWAY. KIDS MY AGE GAVE ME GAS."

"WHY, THANK YOU VERY MUCH."

"THE PROBLEM WITH *THAT* WAS, DAD WAS ALWAYS CAUGHT UP IN SOME PALACE INTRIGUE OR OTHER SO I HAD A LOT OF TIME TO MYSELF."

"I'D HAVE PLAYED WITH YOU."

"GAS. REMEMBER?

"MY BAD. PLEASE, PROCEED."

"*ESPECIALLY* YOU.

"DON'T GET ME WRONG, I WASN'T A LONELY KID--"

"I'M SURE."

"--IT'S JUST THAT... SOMETIMES I MISSED HAVING KIDS MY AGE TO DO... WHATEVER KIDS MY AGE DID."

"AGAIN, I'D HAVE--"

"A *GIRL* FRIEND, OKAY? SOMEONE I COULD RELATE TO."

"THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE THAT?"

"FINAL WARNING."

"SORRY."

"NO. YOU'RE NOT. ANYWAY, THERE I WAS, WISHING YOU WOULD DIE IN A RIDING MISHAP--"

"I *SAID* I WAS SORRY."

"--WHEN I HEAR THIS GIGGLING FROM THE GIDEON'S BLOOM ARBOR. A *GIRL'S* GIGGLING.

"AS FAR AS I KNEW, I WAS THE ONLY LITTLE GIRL IN THE PALACE...WELL, MAYBE YOU... ATTITUDE-WISE, YOU KNOW?"

"I'M GOING TO LET THAT ONE PASS."

"IT WAS...HER. THAT DESPARA CREATURE--"

"CREATURE?"

"WELL...MAYBE NOT THEN. BUT NOW? DEFINITELY."

"RIGHT. SO YOU MEET THIS DESPARA WHEN SHE WAS A LITTLE GIRL--"

"NOT RIGHT OFF. I MUST HAVE SPOOKED HER. SHE LOOKED AT ME LIKE I'D GROWN FANGS AND...

"...VANISHED. POOF! GONE."

"THAT MUST HAVE BEEN DISCONCERTING."

"'DISCONCERTING?' WHAT WAS THAT? YOUR WORD OF THE DAY?

"CAN WE *PLEASE* STICK TO THE SUBJECT AT HAND?"

"YEAH...WELL, I JUST WROTE IT OFF TO AN OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION AND FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT UNTIL--"

"IT HAPPENED AGAIN?"

"WHO'S TELLING THIS STORY? YOU OR ME?"

"SORRY."

"YES. YOU *ARE*. ANYWAY, I KEPT AN EYE ON THE GARDEN. I'M NOT SAYING I HOPED TO SEE HER AGAIN--"

"OF COURSE NOT."

"I MEAN, YOU CAN'T HAVE STRANGE LITTLE GIRLS WANDERING AROUND WITHOUT...WHATEVER.

"THE SECOND TIME I WAS MORE CAUTIOUS."

"HUH..."

"WHAT?"

"I WAS JUST TRYING TO PICTURE *YOU* BEING CAUTIOUS."

"YOU *ARE* AWARE THAT I'M ARMED?

"WE'D...JUST SIT THERE AND READ. MUST HAVE GONE THROUGH HALF THE KIDDY BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY--"

"THAT'S IT? YOU'D JUST READ?"

"SHE...ADORA. THAT'S WHAT SHE TOLD ME HER NAME WAS. SHE WASN'T ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE GARDEN."

"ALLOWED BY WHO? HORDAK?"

"I NEVER FOUND OUT. SOMETHING ABOUT HER NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THIS FAR FROM HOME AND NOT BEING ABLE TO FIND HER WAY HOME IF SHE STRAYED TOO FAR.

"WE WERE EACH OTHER'S LITTLE SECRETS."

"THIS WAS HER IDEA?"

"BOTH OF US. DIDN'T MATTER ALL THAT MUCH THOUGH. NO ONE ELSE EVER SAW HER.

"*EVER.*"

THEN, ONE DAY...SHE JUST STOPPED COMING. WITH THE PASSING OF YEARS, IT WASN'T A FAR JUMP TO "IMAGINARY FRIEND."

YOU DIDN'T MISS HER?

I DIDN'T SAY THAT. I JUST SAID I GREW UP. OKAY?

AND NOW SHE'S BACK.

YEAH. NOW SHE'S BACK.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT MIGHT GIVE US AN EDGE?

WHAT? LIKE SHE'S AFRAID OF SPIDERS OR HEIGHTS OR LIKE THAT?

ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HELP.

NO. NOTHING LIKE-- GAH!

THEIR FORWARD DEFENSE PERIMETER'S IN MOTION! THEY ARE ON THE MOVE!

FECKLESS, NECK STRETCHING POLTROON! A LITTLE WARNING NEXT TIME!?

HOW DO YOU WARN SOMEONE THAT YOU'RE GOING TO SPREAD THE ALARM?

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M TALKING TO YOU, MEKANUISANCE!

WHAT WAS TEELA SO UPSET ABOUT? I KEYED IN ON HER AUDIO FROM HALF THE CASTLE'S WIDTH.

SHE HAS ISSUES.

YES. IT WOULD SEEM SO.

HOW DO YOU THINK OUR TRADITIONAL FOES ARE FARING? EVIL-LYN, THE STINKOR CREATURE...?

STINKOR!? CREATOR'S GRACE, DO NOT BRING HIM UP IN FRONT OF TEELA. YOU THINK SHE'S GOT PROBLEMS WITH MEKANECK...

IS THAT--

TEELA. RIGHT.

HOW DID SHE...? WE...

MY GUESS WOULD BE SHE JUMPED.

JUMPED? FROM *THAT* HEIGHT?

WHAT TOOK YOU?

I *CLIMBED*, OKAY? THERE'S ALL KINDS OF JUTS AND LEDGES STICKING OUT OF THIS CHUNK OF STONES.

OUR COMMON SENSE. YOU KNOW, THE THING TELLS US NOT TO JUMP OFF OF--

WHAT HAVE WE GOT?

MOVEMENT. OF WHAT AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE... UNKNOWN.

TROOP MOVEMENTS? MAYBE THEY'RE MASSING FOR AN ASSAULT?

IT'S NOT ORGANIC.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE TWELVE-HOUR "GRACE" PERIOD?

THAT'S THE DEADLINE FOR THE FIRST ASSAULT. THEY'RE MOVING TO SOFTEN US UP FOR THE FIRST ASSAULT.

THAT CERTAIN?

IT'S WHAT I'D DO.

GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME. ROBOTO, SPREAD THE WORD. EVERYBODY DIGS IN. WE DON'T KNOW HOW BAD THIS INITIAL BARRAGE IS GOING TO BE AND--

BAD. VERY, *VERY* BAD.

CREATOR'S GRACE...

PUM

PUM

IMPUM

IMPUM

INSIDE AND PRAY GRAYSKULL WEATHERS IT!

MAJESTY!

PLAM

PLAM

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! THEY'RE BRINGING THE ENTIRE CASTLE DOWN AROUND US!

GRAYSKULL WILL HOLD!

YOUR LIPS TO MY EARS...

NOW WHAT?

OH...
WONDERFUL.

DEAL WITH THEM! THE GIRL IS MINE!

ROBOTO! SEE TO THE KING!

THE KING CAN SEE TO HIMSELF!

ACK

NICE TRICK. WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST BLINK YOUR ENTIRE ARMY IN HERE AND BE DONE WITH IT?

WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT?

IF I'D KNOWN YOU WERE ONE OF HORDAK'S I WOULD HAVE CLOBBERED YOU WITH THAT BOOK!

NO. YOU WOULDN'T HAVE.

IT'S THE LOGISTICS, ISN'T IT? THE BIGGER THE FORCE BEING 'PORTED, THE MORE OPEN THE TERRAIN HAS TO BE. OTHERWISE YOU RISK KILLING TOO MANY--

STILL A ONE-TRACK MIND! I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D OUTGROW THAT!

I THOUGHT I'D OUTGROWN YOU!

TCHAK

AARH!

ROBOTO!

CHOK

NOT TODAY, TEELA.

YOUR CONCERN IS MISPLACED!

FEUSKARRAKAT

NOR *EVER* IF YOU CHOOSE RIGHT.

TEELA!

HUH? TEELA...?

TEELA! IS SHE INJURED?!

I... I DON'T KNOW. SHE'S *GONE.*

GONE?! THAT'S... TEELA'S *NEVER* RUN FROM A FIGHT!

NOT *THAT* KIND OF GONE. TAKEN. THE DESPARA WOMAN TOOK HER.

UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS...THAT'S WHAT THIS WAS ALL ABOUT. CAPITALIZE ON THE BOMBARDMENT TO--

THEN WHY NOT TAKE THE KING?! OR HE-MAN?! WHY TEELA?!

WE WERE NEVER FRIENDS...

FRIENDS? WHAT *DOES THAT* HAVE TO DO WITH--

DUNCAN...WE'LL GET HER BACK. SEE TO THE DEFENSIVE PERIMETER. WE'VE GOT TO ASSESS DAMAGES.

SEE TO... HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND?! THEY TOOK TEELA! THEY TOOK MY DAUGHT--

MAN-AT-ARMS! SEE TO YOUR CHARGES!

HE IS HER FATHER--

YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT?! HE'S ALSO GENERAL OF THE GUARD AND A DEFENDER OF THE REALM!

I... GUESS THERE IS NOT MUCH I CAN ADD TO THAT.

WE WILL GET HER BACK. I SWEAR IT. BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL I *SWEAR* IT!

ETHERIA.

THE FRIGHT ZONE.

...TOOK HER? EXPLAIN.

THE ONE FROM HER YOUTH. FROM THE... INDISCRETION.

AH...YET *AGAIN* YOUR MONUMENTAL INCOMPETENCE TAKES CENTER STAGE.

THE AGES HAVE ROBBED DEATH OF MUCH OF ITS LUSTER.

HOW MUCH *MORE* EXQUISITE TO PROLONG SUFFERING, TO BASK IN THE AGONY OF HOPE OFFERED THEN WITHDRAWN...OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

SHADOW WEAVER HAS OFFERED HER LIFE MANY TIMES OVER AS ATONEMENT--

THEY *ALWAYS* HOPE...

LORD, WHAT OF THE ONE SHE KNEW AS A CHILDISH FANCY? TO DISCOVER THIS...THIS TEELA AS REAL--

ARE YOU TELLING ME YOUR RAISING OF HER WAS INADEQUATE? THAT YOU FAILED TO INSTILL IN HER ALL THAT IS OF HORDAK? THAT YOU WERE LESS THAN MOTHER TO HER?!

I DID AS I WAS CHARGED. SHE BELIEVES HERSELF OF THE HORDE--

CAUTION, CHURL. DESPARA IS NOT OF THE HORDE. DIMINISH HER AT YOUR RISK.

I MEANT NO OFFENSE. MY MIND IS ADDLED BY CONCERN FOR THE DAMAGE THIS TEELA MIGHT DO. YEARS OF CONDITIONING UNDONE BECAUSE OF--

A KIND SMILE? A HAND OFFERED IN FRIENDSHIP? AN ACT OF COMPASSION?

RANDOR'S DAUGHTER IS BEYOND ALL OF THAT. DESPARA IS OF HORDAK. THERE CAN BE NO GREATER HONOR...

YOU SPEAK AS IF YOU HAD A CHOICE.

I COULD HAVE GONE AFTER HER.

COULD YOU HAVE? AND *WHERE* WOULD YOU HAVE GONE?

IF SHE'D WANTED TEELA DEAD, SHE'D HAVE SLAIN HER, NOT TAKEN HER.

TELL THAT TO DUNCAN.

DUNCAN WILL COME AROUND.

SHOULD HE? WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HIS *DAUGHTER.*

A POINT WELL MADE. IF IRRELEVANT TO OUR CIRCUMSTANCES.

TEELA IS *NOT* IRRELEVANT.

I FORBID IT.

IT?

DON'T. YOU DON'T HANDLE DECEPTION WELL. YOU HAVE EVERY INTENTION OF SETTING OFF AFTER TEELA.

YOU ARE NEEDED HERE. ETERNIA HAS GREATER NEED OF YOU.

AS YOUR KING I COMMAND YOU STAY. AS YOUR FATHER...I FEEL YOUR PAIN.

FOR ALL THE GOOD *THAT* WILL DO!

COULD HAVE GONE BETTER, THAT COULD HAVE.

IF HE IS TO BE KING, HE MUST LEARN THAT HARD LESSONS ARE HARD TAUGHT.

HE KNOWS I AM RIGHT...

A ROYAL COMMAND! TO ME! HIS SON! WHEN TEELA NEEDS ME MOST MY HAND IS STAYED BY A ROYAL COMMAND!

SO, OLD FRIEND, WOULD YOU CARE TO JOIN ME AS I COMMIT AN ACT OF TREASON AND DISOBEY A ROYAL COMMAND?

I WONDER WHAT THE PENALTY IS FOR DOING WHAT'S RIGHT IN SPITE OF THE COMMAND GIVEN?

=SIGH= SOON FIND OUT.

WHO...? SHOW YOURSELF!

SORCERESS! BUT YOU... YOU'RE...

THE ENEMY HAS TAKEN TEELA... TAKEN YOUR DAUGHTER! HAS THIS FORCED YOUR HAND?

WH- WHAT...? WHAT WAS...?

ACCEPT?

BUT AS SORCERESS, YOU HAVE SERVED ETERNIA WELL.

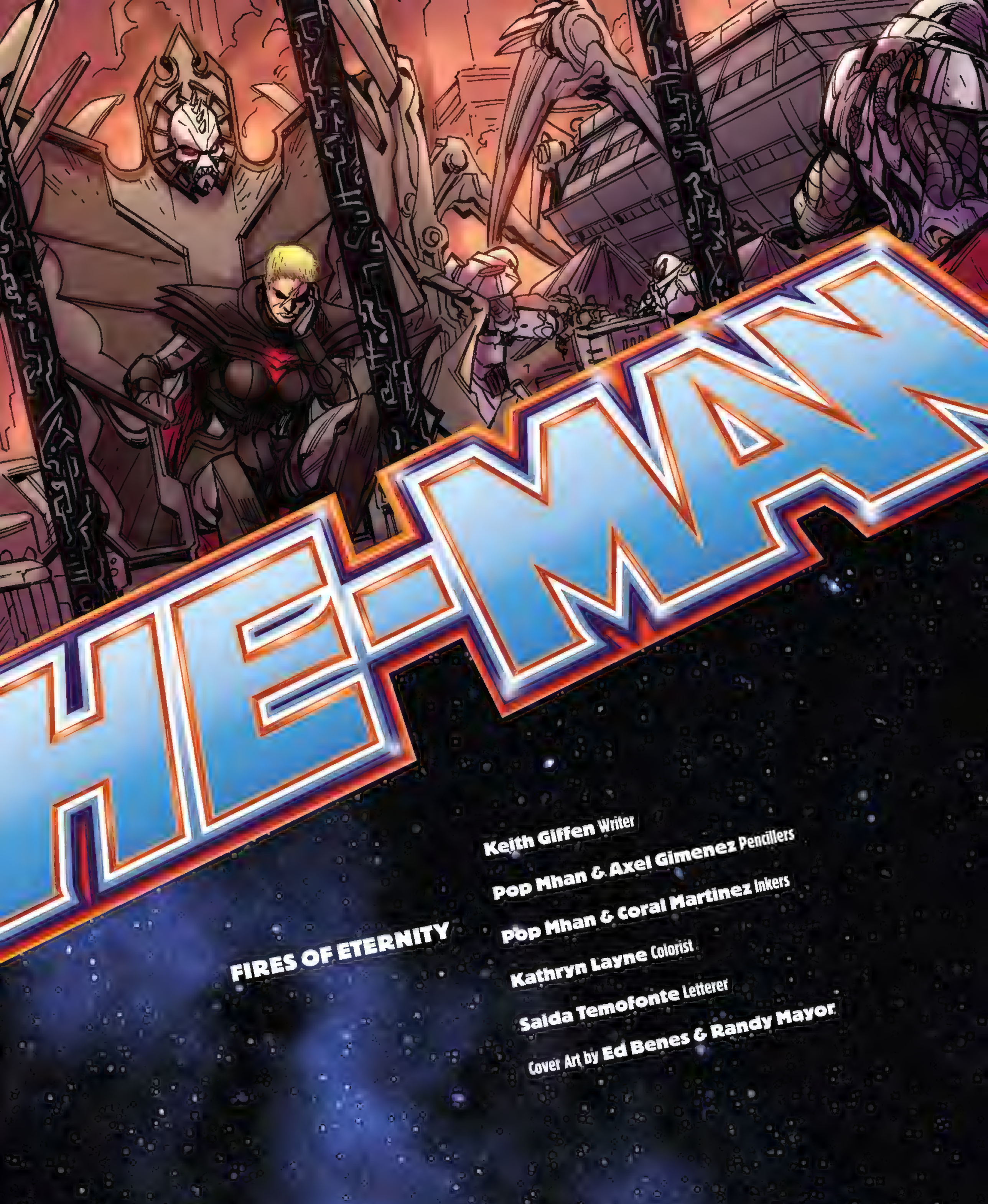
HOPEFULLY DEATH HAS NOT BLUNTED YOUR COUNSEL.

...

DUNCAN WAS RIGHT. AS A MOTHER YOU *ARE* AN ILL FIT.

GRAYSKULL IS MORTAR AND STONE!

"I AM TAKING THIS *WAY* TOO CASUALLY..."


HE-MAN
FIRES OF ETERNITY
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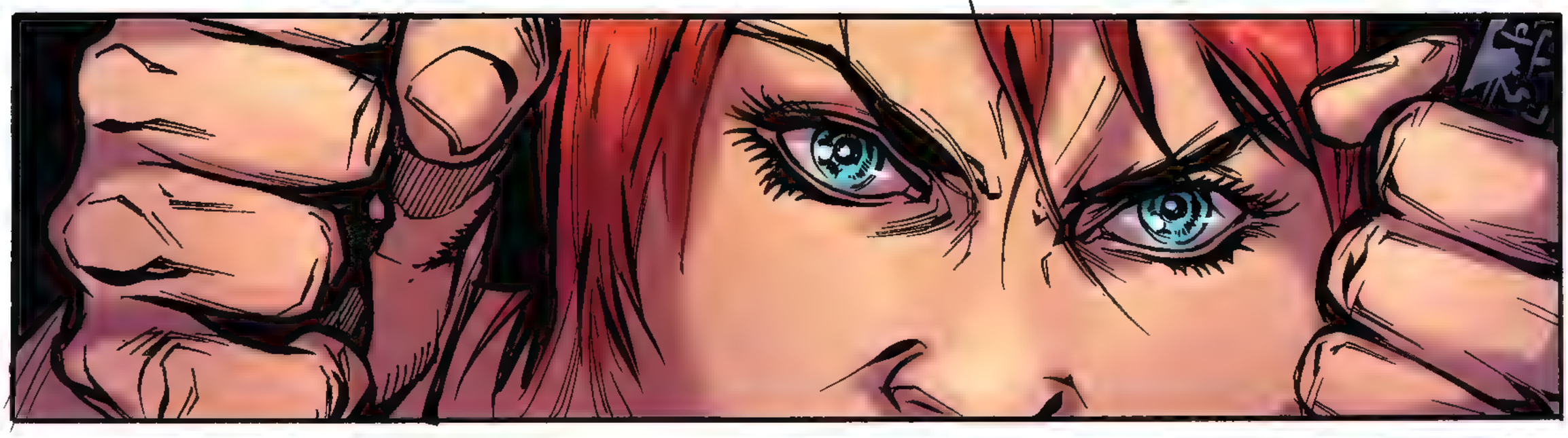

I LOVED YOU LIKE A SISTER.

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

THAT'S A GOOD WAY TO GET YOUR HEAD BLOWN OFF.

YOU'D THINK SO, WOULDN'T YOU? SO FAR NO ONE'S SO MUCH AS FIRED A WARNING SHOT. I THINK THEY ***WANT*** US TO KNOW HOW BRUTALLY OUTNUMBERED WE ARE.

HARD TO MISS.

TELL ME. THEIR SIEGE RING MUST BE HALF A KILOMETER WIDE.

BARRING A MIRACLE, WE'RE NOT WALKING OUT OF THIS ALIVE.

I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU KEPT THAT TO YOURSELF.

ANY WORD ON TEELA?

THEY HAVEN'T DISPLAYED HER BODY, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I--

I KNOW. I KNOW. MY APOLOGY. IT'S JUST THAT I...I'M...

WHY DO YOU CARE? SHE'S ALWAYS GIVEN YOU THE ROUGH EDGE OF HER TONGUE.

YOU MEAN THERE'S A SMOOTH EDGE?

GOOD POINT.

SHE STOOD BY ME WHEN WE WERE KIDS.

MY...ABILITY. IT DOESN'T INSPIRE MUCH CONFIDENCE... NOR RESPECT.

I WAS AN EASY TARGET FOR KIDS LOOKING TO SCORE POINTS. TEELA SOON PUT AN END TO THAT.

TEELA? MY TEELA? ABOUT YO HIGH, RED HAIR...?

SHE DECLARED ME HER BOYFRIEND. TOLD THEM THAT IF THEY DIDN'T LAY OFF OF ME THEY'D ANSWER TO HER.

WE WERE ALL OF SIX YEARS OLD.

EVER SINCE THEN, SHE'S BEEN THE ONLY ONE WHO RAZZES ON ME.

IT'S A SMALL ENOUGH PRICE TO PAY.

PAY? FOR WHAT? YOU'RE A GROWN MAN NOW AND--

FOR HER FRIENDSHIP. SHE DOESN'T MEAN A WORD OF IT, YOU KNOW.

I GUESS I DO... NOW.

THAT'S HOW I KNOW SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

BECAUSE SHE'S YOUR FRIEND?

CAN YOU THINK OF A BETTER REASON?

BECAUSE SHE'S MY DAUGHTER.

YOU WIN.

BEST HUNT SOME COVER, SIR. THEY'RE LOBBING IN ANOTHER BARRAGE.

YOU GET THE FEELING THEY'RE AMUSING THEMSELVES UNTIL THE ATTACK ORDER COMES DOWN?

I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

WHAM WHAM WHAM

KHHPUM PUM PUM

GRAYSKULL CAN'T TAKE TOO MUCH MORE.

GRAYSKULL WILL SERVE AS IT ALWAYS HAS.

THAT DIDN'T SOUND AS ENCOURAGING AS YOU MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT.

I AM NOT HERE TO ENCOURAGE YOU. I AM HERE TO SEE YOU PREPARED FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD.

HOURS CREEPING THROUGH THIS TUNNEL AND YOU HAVEN'T GIVEN ME A STRAIGHT ANSWER YET.

HORDAK IS THE FOE. YOUR SISTER IS BUT AN INSTRUMENT.

A MYTH COME TO LIFE. HOW DO I DEFEAT...

MY *WHAT?*

THE TAKEN. HORDAK'S PRIZE.

MY DARK SECRET.

I DON'T HAVE A SISTER! I HAVE NO SIBLING--

I CAN SAY NO MORE.

DON'T GIVE ME THAT LINE OF--

CREATOR'S GRACE... WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE?!

THESE FIRES ARE THE MAGICAL HEART OF ETERNIA FROM WHICH ALL THINGS WERE WROUGHT...

...THE SWORD, THE PLANET, THE UNIVERSE...

...THIS, PRINCE ADAM OF ETERNIA...IS THE SECRET OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

KNOW?! KNOW *WHAT?!* ZOAR? *SORCERESS!*

WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?!

SORCERESS! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME LIKE THIS! ZOAR!

TEELA WAS RIGHT. MAGES ***ARE*** INFURIATING!

NOT EXACTLY THE WORDS SHE USED BUT CLOSE ENOUGH.

WHAT DOES SHE EXPECT ME TO DO? I FAILED SMITHING.

AM I TO PRETEND THERE'S NOT A SIEGE SO I CAN...CAN...

...CAN *WHAT?!*

DUNCAN SHOULD BE HERE. HE UNDERSTANDS THE INTRICACIES OF--

..."I AM NOT HERE TO ENCOURAGE YOU. I AM HERE TO SEE YOU PREPARED FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD."

THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

"...I HAVE THE POWER."

HEH! LOOK'A YOU. LOOK'A YOU ALL "WOE IS ME" 'N' SAD 'N' LIKE.

THAT'S RIGHT. I'M LONG TERM. I GET T' TALK T' FRESH MEAT LIKE Y'SELF. GIVE A TASTE'A WHAT'S T' COME.

THEY GONNA BREAK YOU HARD, PINK MEAT. THINK YER A WARRIOR? YOU AIN'T NOTHIN' LESS YER TOLD T' BE IT.

PLEASE... PLEASE DON'T HURT ME.

WELL, A'RIGHT. GOT US A FAST LEARNER HERE.

IDIOT! I WAS FEEDING YOU *YOUR* LINE!

STUPID...

WHUNG

...COWARDLY...

WHUNG

...BOOT-LICKING...

WHUNG

I SHOULD LET HER STAVE YOUR SKULL IN!

TO THE SLAVE MASTER! FIFTY LASHES FOR CARELESSNESS! DOUBLE THAT WILL FOLLOW IF THE WELTS ARE TOO SHALLOW! BEG HIM TO BE HARSH!

KEEPING ME AS A PET?

I PREFER MY PETS HOUSEBROKEN.

REALLY? I'D HAVE THOUGHT MEDIUM RARE.

ADORA--

DON'T CALL ME THAT!

WHAT AM I *SUPPOSED* TO CALL YOU? THAT'S THE NAME YOU--

YOU WILL SOON COME TO CALL ME "MASTER."

NOT "MISTRESS"? IS THERE SOMETHING I SHOULD KNOW?

YOU LACK RESPECT.

RESPECT IS EARNED.

RESPECT IS DEMANDED!

REALLY? ON WHAT GROUNDS?

I AM THE SCION! MY FATHER IS LORD HORDAK OF THE BLEAK DOMINION, MASTER OF--

HORDAK? *HORDAK?!* HORDAK ISN'T HUMAN! HE'S SOME KIND OF...OF VAMPIRE THING OR... LIKE THAT.

LORD HORDAK HAS TRANSCENDED HUMANITY--

WHAT HUMANITY?! IF EVEN HALF OF THE TALES ARE TRUE, THEN HORDAK IS THOUSANDS...MILLIONS OF YEARS OLD!

HE WAS NEVER HUMAN BECAUSE HE WAS AROUND LONG BEFORE HUMANITY EXISTED!

THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN ME?! I AM HIS DAUGHTER AND *I* AM HUMAN!

THAT'S NOT FOR ME TO EXPLAIN. I STILL BELIEVE TWO PLUS TWO EQUALS FOUR. WHAT DO *YOU* BELIEVE?

I BELIEVE YOU HAVE OUTLIVED WHATEVER VALUE YOU MAY ONCE HAVE HAD.

BLEED OUT. YOU ARE NOT WORTH A WARRIOR'S DEATH.

SEE TO IT THAT SHE IS DAYS IN HER DYING.

IT WILL BE SO.

KTANG

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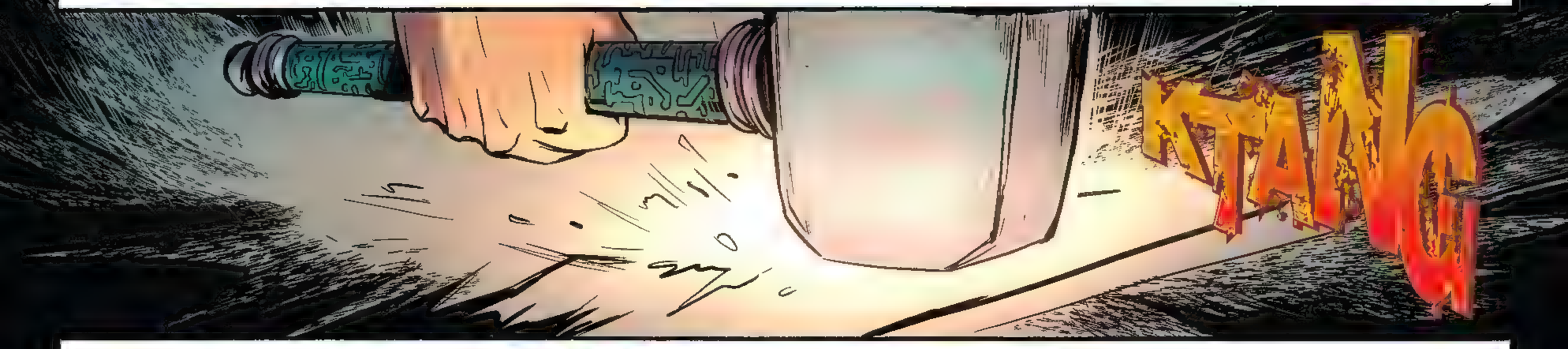
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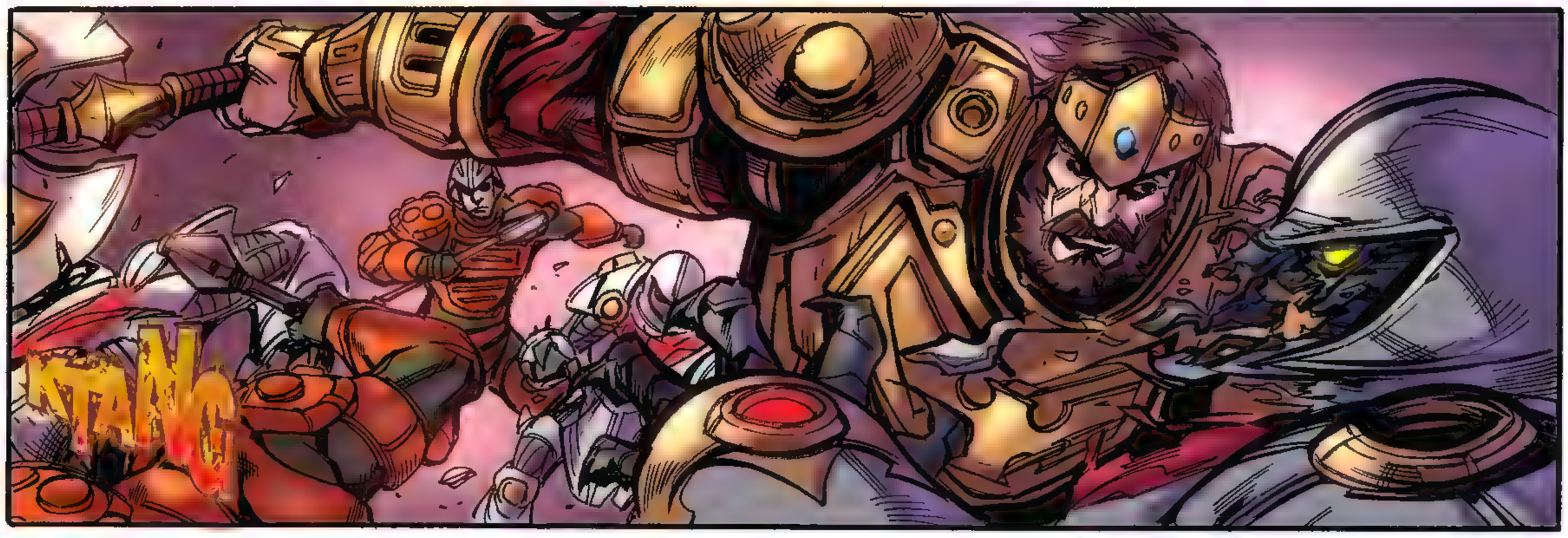
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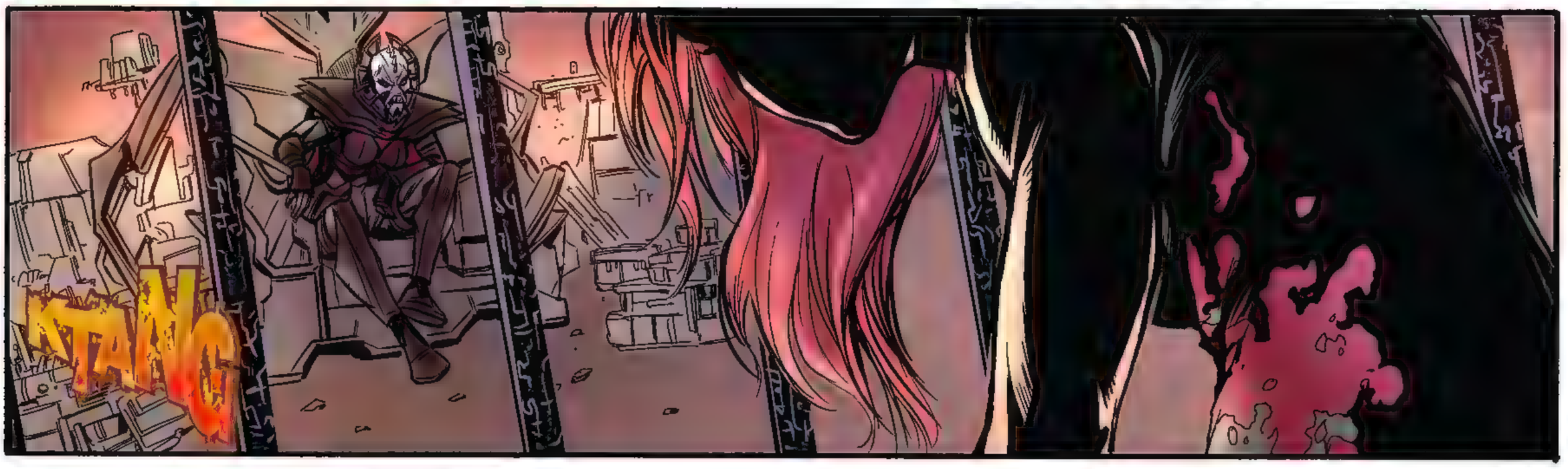
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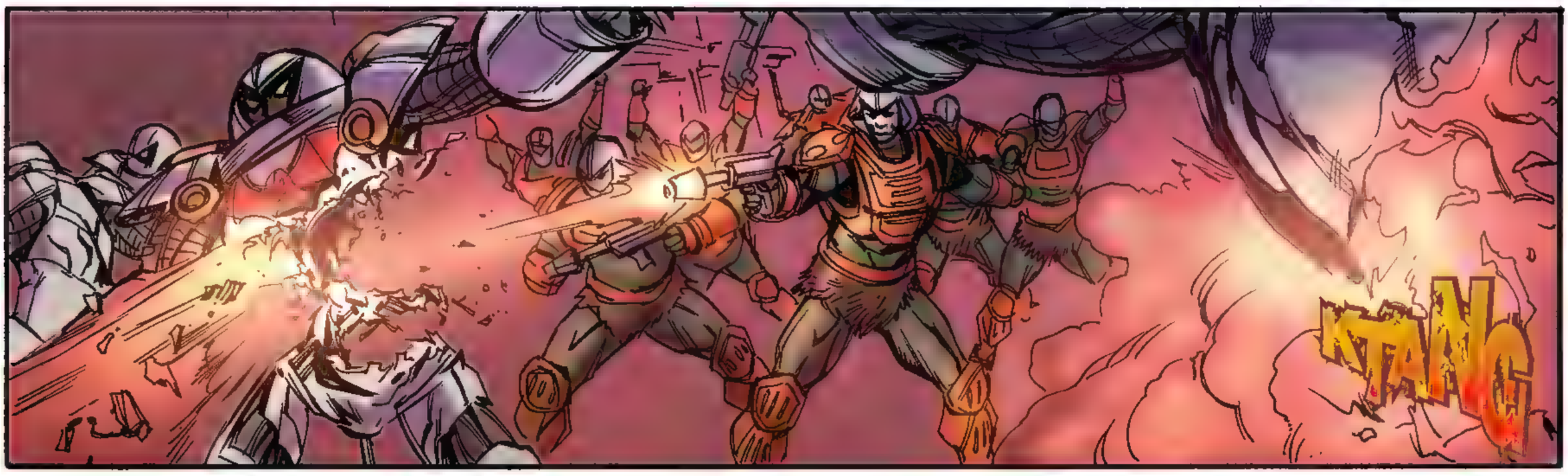
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A HALF-HEARTED ATTEMPT ON THEIR PART, MY LIEGE. MEANT TO HARASS MORE THAN DEFEAT.

THAT'S WHAT I FEARED. AND WHEN THEY COME AT FULL FORCE?

WE MAKE THEM PAY DEARLY FOR EVERY INCH.

MY SON... WHERE...?

"I WAS WONDERING THAT MYSELF."

AHHH... EXQUISITE. A WEAPON WORTHY OF THE FOE.

EXQUISITE. A WEAPON WORTHY OF

IT *HAD* TO BE THROUGH YOU, YOUTH. YOURS HAD TO BE THE HAND BY WHICH THE SWORD WAS WROUGHT. *YOU* HAD TO CLAIM THE POWER AS YOURS BY RIGHT.

IT *HAD* TO BE THROUGH YOU, YOUTH. YOURS HAD TO BE THE HAND BY WHICH THE SWORD WAS

MINE WAS THE GUIDING HAND BUT YOURS WAS THE DESIRE. THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL AND MORE IS YOURS...SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO INVOKE IT...

MINE WAS THE GUIDING HAND BUT YOURS WAS THE DESIRE. THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL AND MORE IS OURS...SHOULD YOU

...SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO PAY THE PRICE. CHOOSE, YOUTH.

...SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO PAY THE

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I HAVE THE POWER!

"WHAT HUMANITY?! HORDAK IS THOUSANDS... MILLIONS OF YEARS OLD!

"...HE WAS AROUND LONG BEFORE HUMANITY EXISTED!

"I STILL BELIEVE TWO PLUS TWO EQUALS FOUR. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?"

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE, CHILD?

?!

IF HE TRULY WISHED TO KEEP YOU AS HIS, HORDAK SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU COME HOME...

THE X-MEN

ONCE UPON A TIME

Keith Giffen Writer

Pop Mhan Artist

Kathryn Layno Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ed Benes, Alejandro Sicat & Kathryn Layno

ETERNIA
CASTLE GRAYSKULL

IT IS THE FONT FROM WHICH ALL MAGICKS FLOW, THE ESSENCE OF ETERNIA AND, BY EXTENSION, THE ESSENCE OF THIS UNIVERSE.

AS THE FONT IS CORE TO ETERNIA, SO IS ETERNIA CORE TO THE UNIVERSE.

YAWN AGAIN AND I WILL HAVE YOUR MOUTH STITCHED SHUT.

ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO LORD HORDAK PIERCED THE VEIL THAT FORBID THE FONT FROM ANY WHO WERE NOT OF ETERNIA BY BLOOD. ETERNIA WAS OVERRUN BY THE HORDE. THE FONT WAS LORD HORDAK'S TO CONSUME.

AND THAT... THAT WOULD END THE TALE WERE IT NOT FOR THE FORGE AND THRICE DAMNED GRAYSKULL AND THE CURSED SWORD HE WROUGHT TO CHANNEL THE POWER OF THE FONT.

THUS DID THE GREAT FAILING COME TO BE. THE LORD HORDAK WAS STRUCK DOWN BY THE POWER OF THE SWORD, GRIEVOUSLY WOUNDED AND BANISHED TO BLEAK DESPONDOS WHERE HIS PHYSICAL FORM WITHERED AND DIED...

... WHERE HIS SPIRIT FORM, CLOAKED IN HATRED AND BILE, PURGED DESPONDOS OF ALL HOPE AND SAW IT RECAST IN HIS IMAGE. DESPONDOS AND HORDAK BECAME AS ONE.

ETHERIA, ETERNIA'S DARK MIRROR, BECAME HOME, ITS PEOPLE CAME TO KNOW HORDAK AS LORD.

THUS WAS I BORN TO POWER! THUS WAS I BORN TO SHARE LORD HORDAK'S CRAVING FOR VENGEANCE! **NOW** DO YOU BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND!?

NOW DO YOU KNOW WHY RESISTANCE IS FUTILE!?

WHY DO YOU *RESIST?*

BET... NIGHT GUARD FIFTY GOLD... PIECES I COULD... GET YOU ON ... KNEES BEFORE ME.

TOO... EASY.

I DON'T KNOW WHO IS THE GREATER FOOL, HER FOR RESISTING OR ME FOR TRYING TO...

... TO WHAT? CONNECT WITH HER? JUSTIFY MYSELF TO HER?

I'VE ALL BUT KILLED HER! THE ONLY REASON SHE'S STILL ALIVE IS BECAUSE I CHARGED THE MED-TECHS TO PROLONG HER AGONY!

"WHAT HUMANITY!? HORDAK IS THOUSANDS... MILLIONS OF YEARS OLD!"

"IF HE TRULY WISHED TO KEEP YOU AS HIS, HORDAK SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU COME HOME..."

I SHOULD HAVE GUTTED THE DAMNED BIRD SAME AS I GUTTED THE GIRL.

WHY DIDN'T I? WHY DID I LISTEN..?

AH. I'VE STARTLED YOU. MY APOLOGIES, ADORA OF ETERNIA.

THAT IS *NOT* MY NAME!

AND YOUR CONCERN IS MORE WITH A NAME THAN WITH AN APPARITION?

NAMES HAVE POWER!

AS DO APPARITIONS. ATTEND...

YOU DO NOT COMMAND ME--

TELL TEELA OF HORDAK AND LISTEN. FOR THE FIRST TIME *TRULY* LISTEN TO WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. LEARN THE TRUTH BY YOUR OWN WORDS.

THE TRUTH AS *YOU* WOULD HAVE ME BELIEVE IT!?

NO. THE TRUTH AS *YOU* MUST COME TO KNOW IT.

"THE LORD HORDAK WAS STRUCK DOWN BY THE POWER OF THE SWORD, GRIEVOUSLY WOUNDED AND BANISHED TO BLEAK DESPONDOS..."

"... WHERE HIS PHYSICAL FORM WITHERED AND DIED..."

... WITHERED AND DIED...

I'D ASK WHERE YOU GOT OFF TO, BUT THE NEW ARMOR'S ANSWER ENOUGH.

IT'S A LONG STORY.

DOES IT INVOLVE RESCUING TEELA?

DO YOU EVEN HAVE TO *ASK*?

THEY'RE PULLING BACK! WE'VE ROUTED THEM!

WHY WOULD THEY FALL BACK? THEIR MOMENTUM WOULD HAVE CARRIED THEM THROUGH FIRST AND SECOND PERIMETERS.

TRY NOT TO SOUND SO DISAPPOINTED. NOT ALL OF US GOT NEW ARMOR.

NOT DISAPPOINTED. SUSPICIOUS. THAT DESPARA'S NOT ONE TO WALK AWAY WHEN THERE'S STILL BLOOD TO BE SPILT.

A STRATEGIC RETREAT?

YOU ASKING ME OR TELLING ME?

THE FORGE! YOU FOUND--

FORGE?

GRAYSKULL'S FORGE. IT'S PART OF THAT LONG STORY I MENTIONED.

HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THE FORGE'S WHEREABOUTS... ITS EXISTENCE?

ZOAR.

SORCERESS? BUT... SHE IS DEAD.

DO MAGES EVER TRULY DIE?

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO BE COMFORTED OR DISTURBED BY THAT.

A NEW SWORD AS WELL. YOU *HAVE* BEEN BUSY.

TIME ENOUGH FOR TALK LATER.

NOW BELONGS TO TEELA.

NOW BELONGS TO GRAYSKULL.

WHEN I RETURN, WE'LL HAVE WORDS ABOUT MY SISTER.

SISTER? YOU HAVE NO SISTER.

THAT'S WHAT I'D HAVE BELIEVED, REGARDLESS OF ZOAR'S WORDS, WERE IT NOT FOR WHAT YOU SAID WHEN YOU FIRST SET EYES ON DESPARA.

... YES.

BRING HER BACK ALIVE, HE-MAN. BRING MY DAUGHTER BACK TO ME ALIVE.

"MARLENA". MOTHER'S NAME. I DON'T THINK YOU WERE AWARE OF SAYING IT.

I...

WAS SHE *THAT* SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE?

A MIRROR IMAGE... SHE... THIS DESPARA IS A MIRROR IMAGE OF YOUR MOTHER AS SHE LOOKED THE DAY WE MET.

TOO MANY QUESTIONS, FATHER. IT'S TIME SOME WERE ANSWERED.

AND MINE, ADAM, IF DAUGHTER SHE BE...

ETHERIA
DESPONDOS WASTE

MOTHER!

DESPARA? CHILD, HAVE YOU TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR SENSES?

YOUR FATHER CHARGED THAT YOU RETURN ONLY WHEN ETERNIA IS GROUND BENEATH--

TELL ME AGAIN OF MY CHILDHOOD! TELL ME AGAIN OF A MOTHER'S LOVE AND A FATHER'S PRIDE!

TELL ME THE *TRUTH!*

THE TRUTH STANDS AS TOLD!

LIAR!

WHAT MADNESS POSSESSES YOU THAT YOU WOULD LAY HANDS UPON--

THE *TRUTH!*

TOO SOON, CHILD. YOUR SUSPICIONS COME TOO SOON.

ONCE YOU HAD GROUND ETERNIA UNDERFOOT, KILLED YOUR OWN KIN, THEN WHAT WOULD IT MATTER IF THE TRUTH WERE KNOWN?

WHERE COULD YOU HAVE GONE? WHO COULD YOU HAVE TURNED TO?

WHO BUT SHADOW WEAVER WOULD HAVE CARED?

KIN?

BROTHER AND FATHER, NOT THAT THEY KNOW THE TRUTH ANY MORE THAN YOU.

ALTHOUGH IT WOULD SURPRISE ME WERE THE FATHER NOT TO SUSPECT. YOU ARE NEAR ENOUGH TO YOUR MOTHER TO BE HER TWIN.

AND I LOOK *NOTHING* LIKE YOU.

YOU LOVED ME AS A MOTHER. YOU STILL CAN.

YOU SURPRISE ME. I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D CLING TO THE LIE.

WHY!? TO WHAT END!? WHEN HE SENT YOU TO ETERNIA HE TOOK YOU FROM ME! HE *KNEW* THE TRUTH AWAITED YOU!

HE JUST DIDN'T KNOW IT WOULD COME TO YOU AFTER SO SHORT A TIME.

HIS ARROGANCE HAS ALWAYS BEEN HIS UNDOING.

WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW, CHILD?

WHO AM I?

HAD YOU NOT BEEN TAKEN, ADORA OF ETERNIA. *PRINCESS* ADORA, IF SUCH AS THAT MEANS SOMETHING TO YOU.

PRINCESS...

THERE WAS NO THRONE WAITING FOR YOU!

THE THRONE WAS YOUR BROTHER'S TO CLAIM... YOUR *TWIN* BROTHER!

ETERNIA HAS LITTLE USE FOR QUEENS EXCEPT AS ORNAMENTS TO DANGLE FROM A KING'S ARM.

HE WAS CALLED KELDOR BEFORE HE SOLD WHAT LITTLE SOUL HE POSSESSED TO HORDAK. POWER, GIRL, NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE ALLURE OF POWER.

AS KELDOR HE WAS INSIGNIFICANT, AT BEST A FOOTNOTE IN ETERNIA'S HISTORY. AS **SKELETOR**, HOWEVER...

... HE WAS OF AWE AND WONDER AND DARK DESIRE. HE WAS ETERNIA'S HISTORY WRIT IN THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT. HE WAS...

... SPECTACULAR.

KNOW HIM AS UNCLE.

YOU WERE THE PRICE KELDOR PAID FOR HORDAK'S GRACE.

YOU AND THE MALE CHILD. ADAM.

THE VERY WARRIOR YOU HAVE SWORN TO SEE DEAD. THERE IS HUMOR IN THAT, IF ONE HAS AN EYE FOR IT.

MORE LIES, "MOTHER"?

I AM WELL PAST LYING--

THEN WHY WAS I TAKEN AND THE ADAM CHILD LEFT BEHIND!?

TEELA. THAT *IS* HER NAME, IS IT NOT; YOUR IMAGINARY FRIEND COME TO LIFE?

WHAT DOES TEELA HAVE TO DO WITH--

HER MOTHER. HER MOTHER SAW YOU SEPARATED FROM YOUR TWIN.

HAD SHE NOT INTERVENED, *BOTH* OF YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN.

SHE WAS A SORCERESS OF GREAT POWER AND GREATER CUNNING.

YOUR EXPRESSION BETRAYS YOU.

IT ASKS THE QUESTION YOUR PRIDE WOULD NEVER VOICE; WHAT THREAT COULD TWO INNOCENT INFANTS POSSIBLY POSE TO HORDAK OF THE BLEAK DOMINION?

PROPHECY, CHILD. THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL. HORDAK BELIEVED YOU TO BE THE PROPHECY GIVEN LIFE.

SHE SUSPECTED THE ROYAL TWINS WOULD BE TARGETED BY HORDAK BECAUSE, WERE THEIR POSITIONS REVERSED, SHE WOULD HAVE TARGETED THEM.

... TO THE POWER GRAYSKULL'S MAGE WAS SWORN TO PROTECT.

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY BELIEF THAT, IN THE END, YOU WERE ALLOWED TO BE TAKEN.

YOU WERE THE SACRIFICE GRAYSKULL REQUIRED. PROPHECY IS OF BLOOD, CHILD. THERE IS ALWAYS A PRICE TO PAY.

THE BOY CHILD OR THE GIRL CHILD, IT MATTERED NOT TO HER. SHE SERVED GRAYSKULL AND GRAYSKULL IS NOTHING IF NOT A HARSH MASTER. THE PROPHECY WAS ALL.

THE SORCERESS CEDED YOU TO SAVE YOUR TWIN.

HAD THE COMBAT CONTINUED, ONE OR BOTH OF YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN KILLED.

THE *PROPHECY* WAS *ALL!*

TELL ME SHE LIES, LORD...

DOES THE WEAPON QUESTION THE WIELDER!?

YOU PETITIONED FOR THE TRUTH AND THIS WRETCHED WENCH WAS FOOL ENOUGH TO GRANT YOUR PETITION!

WHO ARE YOU TO QUESTION THE WILL OF HORDAK!?

I CANNOT ANSWER THAT QUESTION! WHO AM I!? IS MY ENTIRE LIFE A LIE!?

YES, THRALL. YOUR LIFE WAS LIVED AS I DECREED IT! YOU... YOUR VERY **SOUL** WAS RECAST IN MY IMAGE!

NO.

TELL ME, THRALL... WERE **YOUR** CHILD TAKEN FROM YOU, WOULD YOU NOT MOVE THE HEAVENS ABOVE AND THE EARTH BELOW TO GET THE CHILD BACK?

THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME EXCEPT AS A SACRIFICE WILLINGLY MADE AND ALL TOO SOON FORGOTTEN!

NOT SO! NOT SO!

YOU **DARE!**

SORCERESS KNEW! SHE KNEW THE KING WOULD NEVER STOP TRYING TO GET THE CHILD BACK! RUSH TO WAR THEY WOULD AND UNPREPARED WOULD THEY BE!

SORCERESS ***MADE*** THEM FORGET! FOR ETERNIA!

FOR CURSED GRAYSKULL!

SHADOW WEAVER WAS MOTHER TO YOU THEN! SHE IS MOTHER TO YOU STILL! GO! GO TO WHATEVER FUTURE WILL HAVE YOU!

SHRRAKK!

... IMAGINARY WORLD FOR YOU TO PLAY IN.

... A FRIEND YOU SAY? SH-SHH... KEEP HER A SECRET OR SHE WILL GO AWAY...

YOU SEE? YOU SEE HOW GOOD GIRLS ARE REWARDED? ONLY GOOD GIRLS CAN GO TO THE IMAGINARY WORLD.

ARE YOU A GOOD GIRL, DESPARA?

YES, MOMMY...

TEELA!

GHKKK...

LOOK AND LEARN. DO NOT DISAPPOINT ME... "DAUGHTER".

... WISH YOU'D RECONSIDER THIS.

STOP WHINING. IF YOU'D WANTED TO SNEAK OFF ALONE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIPPED OVER ME.

WHO SLEEPS IN THE OPEN ***BETWEEN*** TENTS?

AND I DON'T WHINE.

FOR FUTURE REFERENCE... ME. ENCLOSED PLACES GIVE ME THE CREEPS.

BY THE WAY... YOU ***HAVE*** THOUGHT THIS THROUGH?

NOT PAST "GET TEELA".

WELL, ***THAT'S*** COMFORTING. GUESS WE'LL JUST WALTZ ON INTO THEIR HEAVILY FORTIFIED CAMP, HUNT DOWN TEELA, FREE HER, THEN SNEAK HER OUT WITH NO ONE THE WISER?

YEP.

DID YOU JUST SAY "YEP"?

NGHH... WH..?

YOU!

THWOK!

THIS IS MORE EFFECTIVE.

WHAT!?

YOUR MOTHER GAVE ME TO HORDAK. OR SO *HE* WOULD HAVE ME BELIEVE.

MY MOTHER!?

THE SORCERESS.

THE *WHO!?*

I AM YOUR KING'S DAUGHTER, TAKEN AT BIRTH BY -

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA! BEFORE WE GET INTO THAT, YOU HEALED ME, RIGHT?

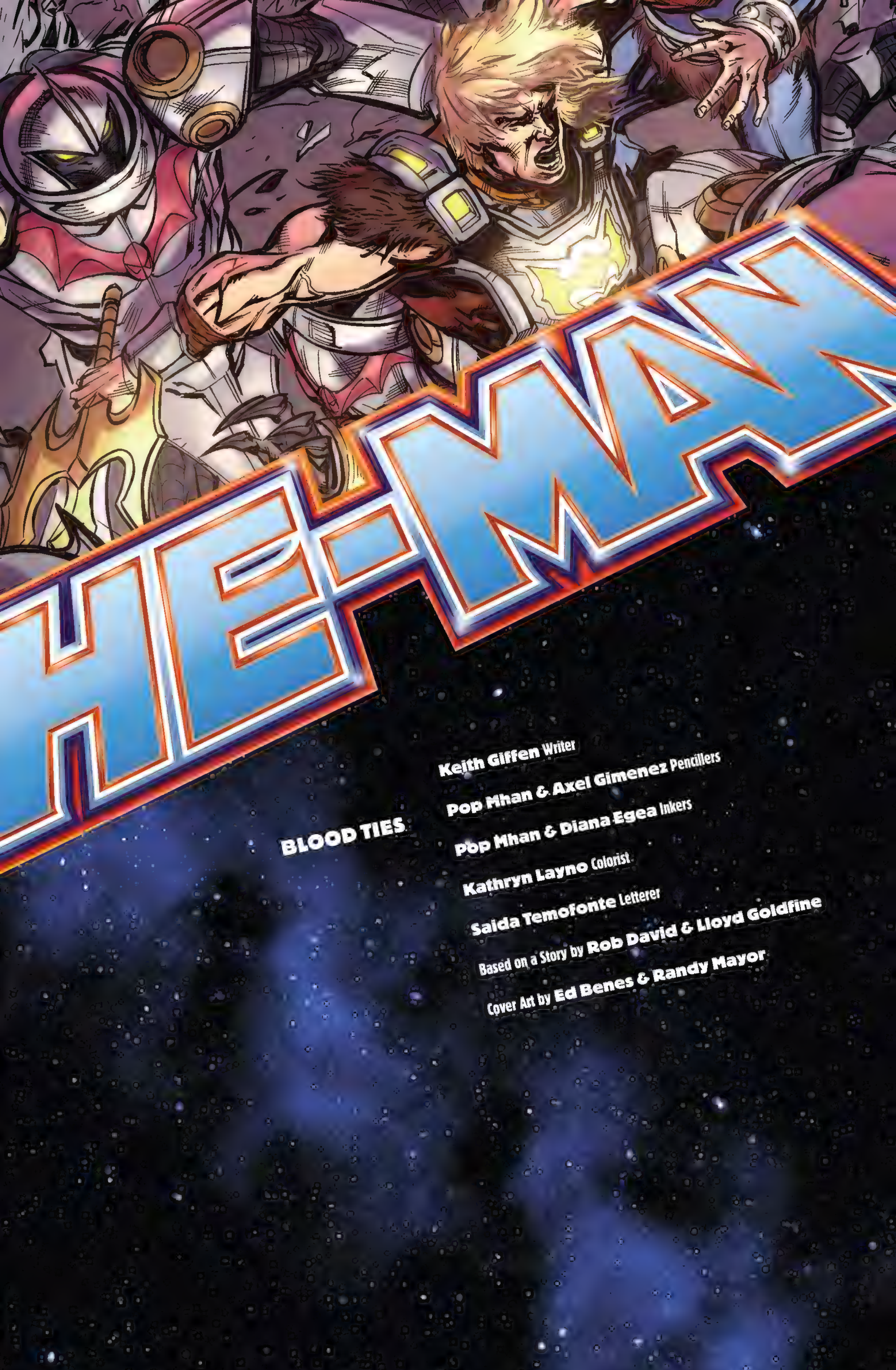
I DID. WITH HELP.

GOOD TO KNOW YOU CAN DO THAT.

H-HK!

NOW WE'RE EVEN. SO, WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT MY MOTHER AND YOU BEING... WHATEVER?

I THINK THIS MARKS THE CONTINUATION OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP...


BLOOD TIES
Keith Giffen Writer
Pop Mhan & Axel Gimenez Pencillers
Pop Mhan & Diana Egea Inkers
Kathryn Layno Colorist
Saida Temofonte Letterer
Based on a Story by Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine
Cover Art by Ed Benes & Randy Mayor

SO MUCH FOR THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE!

I DUNNO, THEY LOOKED AWFUL SURPRISED TO ME!

SO DID WE!

YEAH, WELL WHO EXPECTED THEM TO HAVE HEAT-SENSITIVE MOTION DETECTORS WORKED INTO THEIR ARMOR?!

WE SHOULD HAVE! WE KNEW THEY WERE MORE MACHINE THAN MAN!

I WAS BEING FACETIOUS...

THWA

THUD UUU

THEY KEEP COMING...

...THERE'S NO WAY OUT!

OH, THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY OUT!

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, THIS MAY KEEP THEM TOO OCCUPIED TO ATTACK GRAYSKULL!

NOT TO CARP ON IT, BUT I *TOLD* YOU YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED BEHIND!

YOU WEREN'T VERY CONVINCING! I'D WORK ON THAT IF I WERE--

KRAWRRGH

SEE THAT? EVEN YOUR PET DOESN'T LISTEN.

HE'S NOT MY PET. HE CHOSE ME, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

HE'S *NEVER* LISTENED.

THIS IS A *REALLY* SUCKY RESCUE.

THAT'S TEELA'S LINE.

DON'T WORRY, I'M SURE SHE'LL STICK A FEW CHOICE ADJECTIVES INTO HER READING.

THAT ANY WAY TO SAY "THANK YOU" FOR HEALING OUR WOUNDS?

DESPARA WOULDN'T SAY "THANK YOU" FOR ANYTHING.

AND ADORA?

TOO SOON TO TELL.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU NOW?

NOW I FIGHT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN! HORDAK DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS SOMEONE WHO FORGIVES EASILY...IF AT ALL.

THEN I FIGHT AND DIE. BUT THIS TIME I FIGHT FOR WHAT I BELIEVE IN!

AND THAT WOULD BE?

YOU.

WHOA, WHOA...TOO MUCH RESPONSIBILITY.

YOU'RE THE ONLY THING IN MY LIFE THAT STILL SITS TRUE. THAT COUNTS FOR...

...A LOT.

SMRRAT

FOOL OF A GIRL!

DID YOU THINK HORDAK UNPREPARED FOR THIS INEVITABILITY?! DID YOU PRESUME HORDAK BLIND TO THE REVELATIONS AWAITING YOU ON THIS WRETCHED WORLD!?

THE ONLY REASON YOU STILL LIVE IS BECAUSE HORDAK IS A FORGIVING GOD!

"FORGIVING GOD?" HUH... WISH I HAD A MIRROR SO I COULD SEE IF WE REALLY LOOK THAT STUPID.

DIANA

THINK IT THROUGH, MEAT. WHOM DO I LOATHE MORE THAN ANY SINCE OR BEFORE? WHO STOKES MY WRATH GREATER THAN ANY OTHER?

GRAYSKULL THE MAN IS DEAD!

YOU THINK SO?

OR DOES HE SURVIVE, IF ONLY BY BLOOD-LINE?

AND WHAT IF THAT BLOODLINE WERE FOULED, MADE CORRUPT IN SERVICE TO HIS GREATEST FOE?

I KNOW YOU'VE LIED TO ME! I KNOW OF YOUR DECEPTION! HOW DOES MY KNOWING THIS SUIT YOU?! WHY DOES THE TRUTH SUDDENLY SUIT YOU?!

BECAUSE *YOU* HANDED ME ETERNIA. *YOU* CONQUERED YOUR OWN .

...YOURS WAS THE HAND BY WHICH GRAYSKULL'S LEGACY WAS UNDONE!

IT'S NOT OVER YET!

CLING TO THAT AS IF IT WERE A LIE TOLD YOU FROM BIRTH.

DESPARA--

THAT IS *NOT* MY NAME!

IT IS THE NAME THE MEAT OF THIS REALM WILL KNOW YOU BY, THE NAME THEY WILL CURSE AS AUTHOR OF THEIR MISERY.

THE NAME OF THEIR *CONQUEROR!* NEVER AGAIN WILL THEY BE ABLE TO INVOKE THE NAME GRAYSKULL WITHOUT ALSO INVOKING *YOU!*

YOU HAVE KILLED GRAYSKULL'S LEGACY.

...TAKE OUT THE TRASH IF YOU'VE A MIND TO. HORDAK HAS NO FURTHER USE FOR IT.

THERE'S THE CHARM WE'VE ALL COME TO KNOW AND LOATHE.

WHAT OF DESP...ADORA? I WON'T LEAVE HER BEHIND FOR YOU TO--

BY ALL MEANS, MEAT...

TOO LATE, MEAT. ETERNIA IS MINE!

THIS CHARADE IS ENDED.

CHARADE?

HAD TO BE HIM...

THIS "SIEGE." A LITTLE SOMETHING TO KEEP YOUR "BEST" AND "BRIGHTEST" OCCUPIED WHILE MY HORDE TIGHTENED THEIR CONTROL OF THIS WORLD.

ETERNIA IS NOW OF HORDAK, MADE SO WHILE ITS SO-CALLED MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE DITHERED WITH INCIDENTALS.

YOUR CONCERN FOR CASTLE GRAYSKULL AND THE POWER LOCKED WITHIN BLINDED YOU TO THE REST OF YOUR WORLD.

BUT THEN WHEN HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT PAST GRAYSKULL? ETERNIA ONLY EXISTS IN YOUR MIND DURING CRISES THAT MIGHT ILL EFFECT GRAYSKULL.

TELL ME, "HE-MAN," WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WENT ANYWHERE IN ETERNIA WHERE THERE WAS NOT A CRISIS TO BE OVERCOME?

YOUR MONSTROUS HUBRIS CHALLENGES HORDAK'S. HORDAK, AT LEAST, ACKNOWLEDGES THAT FACT... EXULTS IN IT!

YOU THINK YOURSELVES AS BEING OF GRAYSKULL, NOT OF ETERNIA. I HAVE, TRUTH BE TOLD, REMOVED A BURDEN FROM YOU. THE BURDEN OF ETERNIA.

YOU ARE *SO* WELCOME.

THIS IS NOT OVER! YOU WILL NEVER TAKE GRAYSKULL WHILE A SINGLE ONE OF US LIVES!

FOOL! I'VE ALREADY TAKEN IT!

A BOON! A GIFT FROM YOUR LORD. STAND DOWN, FALSE WARRIOR...

RRR

...GRAYSKULL IS NO LONGER A CONCERN. I GRANT YOU YOUR FREEDOM.

PRINCE

THE PRICE OF ARROGANCE. THE PRICE OF BELIEVING THAT HORDAK WOULD TRUST HIS HORDES TO THE BLOODLINE OF GRAYSKULL.

THE MALIGN INFLUENCE OF THE FRIGHT ZONE HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT ETERNIA.

WHILE YOU MADE YOUR FUTILE STAND, THE DARKNESS SEEDED BY HORDAK TOOK ROOT, GREW, CORRUPTED THE VERY LAND YOU SOUGHT TO SAVE. YOU HAVE FAILED!

HOW MANY DIE TODAY FOR A HOLLOW IDEAL? HOW MANY FIGHT TO THE DEATH AMID THE RUINS OF THE ONLY GOD THEY'VE EVER SERVED?

HOLLOW WORDS. YOU KNOW THIS CANNOT STAND. YOU MAY HAVE WON A BATTLE BUT THE WAR STILL RAGES.

ETERNIA IS MINE!

THAT PROPHECY HAS ALREADY BEEN FULFILLED! HORDAK HAS *NOTHING* TO FEAR FROM YOU!

THE LAND, YES, BUT THE PEOPLE? NEVER!

THIS SWORD BANISHED YOU ONCE, IT WILL DO SO AGAIN! BY MY WORD, IT WILL DO SO AGAIN.

WE'RE DOOMED!

FOR ONCE I AGREE WITH YOU.

RUN, MY FRIEND. WE SHALL MEET YOU AT POINT DREAD!

GRR!

DON'T TELL ME YOU HAVE A WAY OUT OF HERE.

FIRST RULE OF MAN-AT-ARMS...

"...ALWAYS BE PREPARED!"

POINT DREAD.

INSANE. THE DEVASTATION. WE LOST SO MANY. THE MASTERS YOU SEE HERE...THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO MADE IT OUT ALIVE...

...I COULDN'T SAVE THEM, ADAM. I COULDN'T SAVE MY PEOPLE.

YOU LED THE SURVIVORS HERE, FATHER. YOU LED THEM TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.

WE NEED TO RECLAIM GRAYSKULL. SOMEHOW.

WHAT OF GRAYSKULL THEN? ARE ITS SECRETS STILL SAFE? DID THEY SURVIVE THE CASTLE'S DESTRUCTION AND, IF SO, HOW WELL PROTECTED ARE THEY?

SKELETOR HAD POSSESSION OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL DURING THE TIME WE WANDERED WITHOUT MEMORY. IF SKELETOR COULD NOT DISCOVER THE CASTLE'S SECRETS--

WE STILL POSSESS THE SWORD OF POWER. REFORGED. A WEAPON WORTHY OF OUR FOE.

FOR NOW, THAT AND OUR FAITH WILL HAVE TO DO. GRAYSKULL WILL PERSEVERE. IT ALWAYS HAS--

BUT THEN SKELETOR IS NOT HORDAK.

IT ALWAYS WILL.

AND THE GIRL? DESPARA? MY DAUGHTER RETURNED TO ME--

SHE'S... NOT READY YET. THERE ARE... ISSUES SHE HAS TO WORK OUT.

SHE BLAMES ME.

SHE BLAMES HERSELF.

THEN SHE IS WRONG TO. SHE WAS MISLED. WE WERE *ALL* MISLED.

I COULD HAVE HER BROUGHT BEFORE YOU BUT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AGAINST HER WILL--

NO! NO... I'LL NOT HAVE HER MEET ME ON HER KNEES.

WHAT WILL SHE DO?

WHATEVER SHE WANTS. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE...WHATEVER SHE WANTS.

AT LEAST SHE'S WITHDRAWN HER OATH TO SEE ME DEAD.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, HOW *IS* TEELA?

"LET'S JUST SAY I WOULDN'T TRADE PLACES WITH DUNCAN IF I HAD THE PLAGUE AND HE WAS THE CURE."

WELL?

THIS IS... IT'S DIFFICULT.

GOOD.

I *AM* YOUR FATHER, YOU KNOW.

THIS WILL BE MORE ABOUT MY MOTHER. THE SORCERESS. WHOSE FUNERAL, YOU MIGHT REMEMBER, I ATTENDED NOT ALL THAT LONG AGO.

I THINK A NICE LONG CHAT ABOUT HER IS CALLED FOR. YOU KNOW...WHY I WAS NEVER TOLD, WHY I HAD TO FIND OUT ABOUT HER FROM ANYONE BUT YOU...

GONE. SHE DEPARTED WELL BEFORE WE REACHED POINT DREAD.

AND HE-MAN LET DESPARA GO?

THIS COULD TAKE SOME TIME TO--

I CAN WAIT.

YES... YOU CAN.

AND WHAT OF YOUR... FRIEND?

NO. HE LET ADORA GO.

YOU REALLY THINK CHANGING THE SUBJECT'S GOING TO DO YOU ANY GOOD?

=SIGH= NO.

SHE *IS* SOMETHING, ISN'T SHE?

SHE IS A GOOD FRIEND.

GOOD TO HEAR. SHE IS, AFTER ALL, BETROTHED TO ADAM.

I JUST HOPE I'M THERE WHEN DUNCAN FINALLY TELLS HER. NOW *THAT* OUGHT TO BE QUITE THE SPECTACLE.

RANDOR WANTS US READY TO MOVE OUT AS SOON AS THE LAST OF THE WOUNDED HAS BEEN TENDED TO. SPREAD THE WORD.

MOVE OUT TO WHERE, STRATOS? ETERNIA HAS FALLEN TO HORDAK--

TO WHEREVER WE CAN DO THE MOST GOOD.

FUGITIVES IN OUR OWN LAND. DID YOU THINK IT POSSIBLE?

EVERY DAMNED DAY. IF IT WASN'T A CONCERN THERE'D BE NO MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.

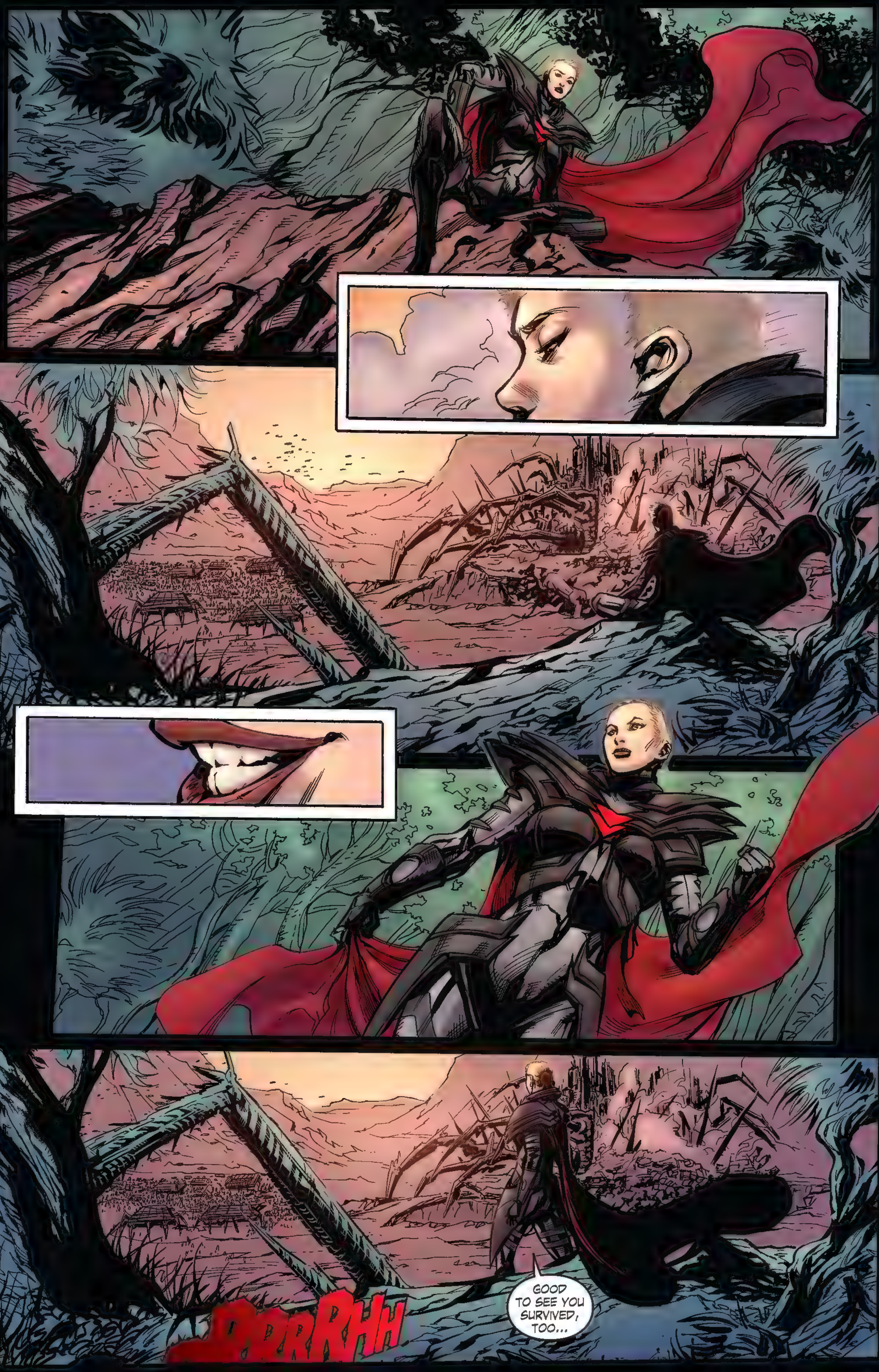
TELL THE KING WE'LL FOLLOW WHERE HE LEADS...WHEREVER THAT MAY BE.

AND TELL HIM WE'RE OFFENDED THAT HE THOUGHT HE HAD TO REMIND US.

DARK TIMES ARE AHEAD, OLD FRIEND.

YOU MEAN DARKER THAN BEING CALLED FISTO?

I'M GOING TO PRETEND I DIDN'T HEAR THAT.


GOOD TO SEE YOU SURVIVED, TOO...
DRRRHH

WHAT'S THIS NOW? NOT SATISFIED WITH NEARLY RIPPING MY FACE OFF?

HAD A CHANGE OF HEART, HAVE YOU? THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOUR MASTER BEING MY BROTHER?

CREATOR'S BREATH BUT THAT STILL SITS AWKWARD IN MY HEAD...

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING... BUT NO. YOUR PLACE IS WITH THE HE-MAN.

I'VE YET TO FIND MY PLACE.

TELL YOU WHAT, I FIND MY PLACE, YOU'LL BE THE FIRST TO KNOW. HOW'S THAT?

GO ON WITH YOU NOW. BACK WHERE YOU BELONG.

I'VE GOT SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS TO SEE TO.

ETHERIA.

ETERNIA IS FALLEN TO HORDAK AND SOON ENOUGH THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL WILL BE HORDAK'S TO WIELD.

A *GLORIOUS* MOMENT.

THEN WHY HAS THERE BEEN NO CALL TO CELEBRATE SUCH A GLORIOUS MOMENT? WHY DOES HORDAK BROOD WHEN HE SHOULD BE EXULTING?

WHY DO I FEEL AS IF IN WINNING, I HAVE LOST?

THE ETERNIAN CHILD?

MADNESS! SHE WAS BUT A PAWN! WHAT REASON IS THERE FOR HORDAK TO FEAR ONE SUCH AS THAT!?

WHAT REASON INDEED..?

WHAT DID YOU BRING THIS TIME?

IT'S ABOUT TWO GIRLS WHO BECOME THE BESTEST FRIENDS. SEE? THAT'S A PICTURE OF THEM THERE.

OHH! THEY'RE LIKE US!

EYU! THEY ARE NOT! ONE'S ALL FRECKLY-LIKE AND THE OTHER'S GOT A BIG NOSE!

I MEANT THAT THEY'RE BESTEST FRIENDS. THAT'S LIKE US. RIGHT?

RIGHT?

DC UNIVERSE
VS.
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

CROSSING OVER

Keith Giffen
Writer

Dexter Soy
Artist

Cover Art by **Ed Benes & Randy Mayor**

EARTH

Greenwich Village,
New York City

SKY 03

CH-TOOM!

DEAR GOD... WHAT... WHAT WAS THAT?

ONE OF JOHN'S SECURITY CONJURINGS. I SUPPOSE THAT LEVEL OF PARANOIA *DOES* COME IN HANDY EVERY NOW AND THEN.

!?!

I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.

ENTER FREELY AND OF YOUR OWN WI--

DON'T. PLEASE... JUST *DON'T.*

I SUPPOSE YOU DON'T CARE FOR TEA EITHER?

ETERNIA
The Kelting Pass

I can't believe we've been reduced to this.

Thanks to your idiot sister.

Deal with it. The Horde may have taken Eternia--

--but *holding* it, that's a whole other thing. I think that's a lesson Hordak should learn.

HARD.

On my word.

And Teela? This time we need a functional one. We can't interrogate scrap metal.

He was checking out my butt! The perv!

They're more machine than man. And besides, bad taste in women is not a killing offense.

NOW!

WE'LL REVISIT THAT COMMENT LATER.

REBELS!

PATRIOTS, TIN MAN!

SHRKK

REMEMBER! WE NEED ONE INTACT!

THAT'S *INTACT,* TEELA! AS IN, CAPABLE OF SPEECH!

THESE CLOWNS CAN'T AIM WORTH A DAMN.

WHY DID THAT SOUND LIKE A COMPLAINT?

I LIKE A CHALLENGE.

NO COMMENT.

NO COMM... WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

I THINK I'LL GO FIGHT OVER HERE.

HEY! *HEY!!* I *KNOW* WHERE YOU LIVE!

WHAT DID YOU FEED HER WHEN SHE WAS GROWING UP? FURNITURE?

CAN WE *PLEASE* JUST FOCUS ON TAKING A FUNCTIONAL ONE THIS TIME?

YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND.

TONK!

MINIMUM DAMAGE! *FINALLY!*

THAT'S A HIGH SECURITY TRANSOM.

WHOEVER THEY STASHED AWAY IN THERE--

ASSUME NOTHING! FOR ALL WE KNOW, THEY COULD HAVE SKELETOR IN THERE!

NOW *THERE'S* A PLEASANT THOUGHT.

CRACK IT OPEN AND SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT?

DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY THEY MIGHT HAVE SKELETOR IN THERE?

I SAY A LOT OF THINGS.

YOU DO AT THAT.

SOMEONE'S SKATING ON THIN ICE.

HERE, LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND WITH THAT.

YOU DIDN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION.

I KNOW.

CHAK!

EVIL-LYN!?

QUICK! CLOSE IT!

BUT SHE'S RESTRAINED--

SHE'S ALSO ANNOYING. ARE YOU GOING TO HELP ME CLOSE THIS OR NOT?

HE-MAN AND HIS LITTLE STRUMPET. CAN MAN-AT-ARMS AND THE OTHER MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE BE FAR BEHIND?

WELL? ARE YOU GOING TO STAND THERE AND GAWK OR...

... ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY FRIEND.
WHAT A CHUNK OF HORSE--
IS SHE ALWAYS THIS COARSE?
I'M AFRAID SO.
FOR THE MOST PART...
UH HUH.
SHE STILL HASN'T TOLD US WHY THEY HAD HER STASHED AWAY IN THAT ISO-BLOCK.
FEAR.
OF?
OF WHAT I FOUND OUT ABOUT HIS WHEREABOUTS. I CAN UNDERSTAND THEIR CONCERN. WERE IT TO BECOME COMMON KNOWLEDGE, THE ENTIRE BALANCE OF POWER COULD BE SHIFTED.
OF COURSE THAT WOULD ALL DEPEND ON HIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE.
WITH *YOU* LOT, THAT IS. HE'S QUITE SMITTEN WITH ME, YOU KNOW.
DO WE *REALLY* WANT TO HEAR THIS?
YES. WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT, EVIL-LYN?
WHY... *SKELETOR* OF COURSE.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR MORE?

THAT'S... QUITE AN INTERESTING STORY.

IT'S NOT A STORY, IT'S THE TRUTH!

I BELIEVE YOU. STORIES ARE NOT ALWAYS FICTION...

... AND I WOULD NOT HAVE KNOWN OF YOUR COMING WERE YOU NOT... AHH...

A DIRE HARBINGER? IT'S ALL RIGHT. TODAY I PLAY THE GORE CROW. SO BE IT.

YOU KNOW WHO I AM THEN?

I KNOW OF YOUR NEED, IF NOT OF THE NEED ITSELF. PERHAPS YOU MIGHT ENLIGHTEN ME?

I'D RATHER NOT REPEAT MYSELF.

MEANING?

JOHN CONSTANTINE.

I CAME TO PETITION JOHN CONSTANTINE.

SKELETOR WALKS THE EARTH.

SKELETOR? SOUNDS PRETTY OMINOUS.

I THOUGHT WE'D AGREED THAT YOU'D CONFINE THAT NASTY HABIT TO THE STREET.

I MAKE IT A POINT TO STOP LISTENING AFTER SOMEONE SAYS "WE'VE GOT TO TALK."

YOUR GUEST HAVE A NAME?

MARLENA.

REALLY?

AND HERE I WAS THINKING YOU WERE DEAD.

YOU KNOW HER?

I KNOW *OF* HER. FROM MYTH.

THERE IS MORE TRUTH IN MYTH THAN IN HISTORY.

SKELETOR, YOU SAY. OH... *DO* TELL ME MORE.

EARTH
Salem, Massachusetts

BECAUSE THE FABRIC SEPARATING THIS WORLD FROM OTHERS LIKE IT, YET NOT, IS THINNEST AT THIS POINT.

YOU, LIKE, SAID THAT ABOUT THE OTHER TWELVE SITES.

ONLY BECAUSE YOU SAW FIT TO ASK THE SAME QUESTION TWELVE TIMES BEFORE ASKING IT YET AGAIN!

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! YOU DON'T HAVE TO BITE MY HEAD OFF!

THE SIPHONS ARE ACTIVE?

THE SIPHONS ARE IN PLACE. *HE* RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACTIVATE THEM.

THAT'S GOT TO GALL.

I MEAN, YOU BEING "HIGH AND MIGHTY MUCKA-MUCK" SKELETOR OF ETERNIA AND HERE YOU ARE REDUCED TO A--

Hgn!

YOU SEEM TO BE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE EQUALS.

Glk...

BLACK ALICE AND YET AS PALE AS THE FACE OF THE MOON.

THAT WILL NOT DO. NO, NOT AT ALL.

BWOOSH

EEEEEEEE

*EEEEEEE

EEEEEEEEEE

SHE SHOULD COUNT HERSELF FORTUNATE THAT I DID NOT KILL HER OUTRIGHT.

DESPITE MY COMMAND THAT YOU *NOT* KILL HER?

YOU KNEW WHAT I WAS WHEN YOU... RECRUITED ME.

EEEEEEEEEE

RECRUITED... AMUSING, THAT.

SHE IS *INTOLERABLE!*

BLACK ALICE SERVES A PURPOSE, AS DO YOU. WERE IT NOT FOR HER, THIS WORLD MIGHT HAVE ESCAPED MY NOTICE.

DOES SHE STILL BELIEVE ME AN ELDER GOD?

EEEEEEEEE

ZOAR...

THAT'S WHAT IT'S CALLED ON ETERNIA.

GAIA. THE LIVING SOUL OF THE EARTH.

THE VERY FIRES OF ETERNITY. THE NATURAL ESSENCE OF MAGIC. THE... FONT OF ENERGY THAT MAGES DRAW ON TO WORK MAGICKS.

AND THIS... SKELETOR'S COME TO HARVEST OUR ESSENCE FOR WHATEVER ***NEFARIOUS*** REASON -

I'M TELLING YOU THE TRUTH! IF HE DRAINS THE FONT, THE SOUL OF THE PLANET DIES! THE ***PLANET*** DIES!

HE KNOWS. IT'S HOW HE DEALS WITH THINGS...

...POORLY.

RIGHT THEN, MOVING ON. WHY COME ***HERE*** TO HARVEST THIS ESSENCE? ACCORDING TO MYTH, YOUR ETERNIA'S THE CENTER OF ALL CREATION, A HOTBED OF SCIENCE BY WAY OF MAGIC.

I MEAN, IT'S LOUSY WITH MAGES SO ITS ***GOT*** TO HAVE A PRETTY DECENT AMOUNT OF--

NOWHERE NEAR AS MUCH AS EARTH.

MAGIC IS A FACT OF LIFE IN ETERNIA. HERE ON EARTH? THERE ARE, WHAT? A FEW DOZEN ACTIVE MAGES ON THE ENTIRE WORLD?

THE ESSENCE HERE IS BARELY TAPPED. EARTH'S FONT IS A RICH RESOURCE, A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF NEAR LIMITLESS POWER.

THAT'S WHY *WE'RE* HERE. WHY I TOLERATE THIS... JUSTICE LEAGUE DARK. CAN'T HAVE SOMEONE GETTING *TOO* GREEDY NOW, CAN WE?

THEN YOU'LL HELP ME?

NOPE.

WE'LL SEE TO THIS. YOU'D JUST BE IN THE WAY.

GOING TO NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS SKELETOR CHARACTER BEFORE WE CAN...

...WHAT?

YOU LACK RESPECT. KNOW THAT YOU ARE ADDRESSING MARLENA OF TWO WORLDS, WIFE OF RANDOR THE FOURTH...

...WARRIOR QUEEN OF ETERNIA!

THWUD!

K-TASH!

KISH!

TISH!

DON'T SUPPOSE IT EVER OCCURRED TO YOU TO LEAD OFF WITH "WARRIOR QUEEN OF ETERNIA"?

GAIA'S BREATH, HE'S LIGHTING *ANOTHER* ONE.

THEN WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER?

I'M THINKING WE D--

SHHUMM

OKAY. PROBABLY NOT A GOOD THING.

SIGH... I *HATE* IT WHEN I'M RIGHT.

... CALL IT THE HOUSE OF SECRETS OR MYSTERY OR WHATEVER. I CAN NEVER KEEP IT STRAIGHT.

WHAT MATTERS IS THAT IT SITS SLIGHTLY TO THE LEFT OF THEIR REALITY AND HAS BEEN DESERTED SINCE... GOD ONLY KNOWS WHEN.

MAKES IT THE PERFECT HIDEY HOLE, EH?

I DO *NOT* HIDE.

HIDE... LURK... WHATEVER. SUITS OUR PURPOSES. UNLESS YOU *WANT* THEM IN YOUR FACE?

THEY WILL COME TO KNOW ME SOON ENOUGH.

TELL ME OF THEM.

ALL OF THEM!? THERE'S, LIKE, A SMALL ARMY OF THEM!

THEN TELL ME OF THE ONES THAT POSE THE GREATEST THREAT.

HUH! THAT'D BE THE JUSTICE LEAGUE.

JUSTICE LEAGUE?

I KNOW. ALMOST AS BAD AS MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE. NOWHERE NEAR AS GOOFY-SOUNDING THOUGH.

HERE YOU GO. SUPERMAN, BATMAN, WONDER WOMAN AND SOME GUYS WHOSE NAMES I FORGET. I THINK ONE OF THEM HAS THE WORD "GREEN" STUCK IN THERE SOMEWHERE.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I THINK MR. GREEN JEANS, OR WHATEVER HE CALLS HIMSELF, SPLIT THE GROUP A WHILE AGO.

THAT'D BE THE OTHER JUSTICE LEAGUE.

NO MYSTICS?

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE?

YEAH. THEY'RE POPPING UP LIKE SUNDOLLAR FRANCHISES. GOT THIS ONE, ONE THAT ADDED AMERICA TO THEIR NAME AS IF THAT MAKES THEM SPECIAL, AND ONE FULL'A MYSTICS AND MYSTIC WANNABES.

THAT'S THE ONE I'D BE WORRIED ABOUT. THAT CONSTANTINE GUY...

GIVES ME THE CREEPS, THAT ONE DOES.

CONSTAN... *JONATHAN* CONSTANTINE?

GET OUT! YOU *KNOW* HIM!?

I KNOW *OF* HIM. I THOUGHT HIM A MYTH.

GET! *OUT!*

HE IS, IF HE IS AS TOLD OF, NOT A HERO. FAR FROM IT.

He will make a much better ally than this self-deluding wench...

WHAT? WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY?

NOTHING OF INTEREST, GIRL. MERELY... THINKING OUT LOUD...

ETERNIA
Kelting Woods

YOU'RE CERTAIN THERE ARE NO WOOD MITES IN THIS LOG?

IF THERE WERE, I'D TIE YOU TO IT AND DOUSE YOU WITH HONEY.

FOCUS! *BOTH* OF YOU!

IT'S A DELIGHTFUL FEELING, NO?

WOOD MITES? I THOUGHT YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT--

NO, NO, NO... BEING *NAUGHTY.*

THAT BETTER NOT MEAN WHAT I THINK IT DOES.

I MEAN VIOLATING THE PAN-DIMENSIONAL ACCORD. KING RANDOR WILL BE *FURIOUS!*

WE HAVEN'T DECIDED ANYTHING YE--

REALLY? DO I LOOK THAT FOOLISH?

ACTUALLY--

YOU PULL US AWAY FROM THE FIRE'S COMFORT AND I'M TO BELIEVE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH PRYING EYES AND THOSE WHO MIGHT SEEK TO STOP US?

SKELETOR'S PRESENCE COULD TIP THE BALANCE OF POWER--

HE COULD SIDE WITH HORDAK, TIP IT RIGHT OFF THE SCALE... IN THE *WRONG* DIRECTION.

NONSENSE. SKELETOR COVETS ETERNIA. HE WOULD NEVER AGREE TO SHARE AS MUCH AS A CENTIMETER WITH ANYONE ELSE. *I* KNOW THAT ONLY TOO WELL.

THEN WE *ARE* SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING THIS.

WITH ANY LUCK, KING RANDOR WILL NEVER FIND OUT.

YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?

NOT FOR A MINUTE.

BESIDES WHICH, WE WON'T BE IN DIRECT VIOLATION OF THE ACCORD.

YOU KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT.

RIGHT THEN. LET'S GET ON WITH IT, SHALL WE?

AT THE VERY LEAST, THIS SHOULD GIVE HORDAK SOMETHING TO CONSIDER. SKELETOR'S ABSENCE WAS *QUITE* THE FACTOR IN HIS VICTORY.

WE'RE *NOT* VIOLATING THE ACCORD.

IF ANYTHING, WE'RE PREVENTING SKELETOR FROM VIOLATING IT AS WELL AS RETRIEVING--

NO? THEN WHY ARE WE "DISCUSSING" THIS IN KELTING WOODS INSTEAD OF IN THE MIDST OF WHICHEVER RESISTANCE CAMP "GOOD KING" RANDOR HAS SEEN FIT TO GRACE WITH HIS PRESENCE?

WHY NOT TELL "GOOD KING" RANDOR HIS BROTHER'S AT IT AGAIN AND SET OFF WITH A COMPANY OF MASTERS?

BECAUSE THAT WILL STRETCH THIN RESOURCES ALREADY STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT. HOW LONG AGO DID HE REACH OUT TO YOU?

SHORTLY AFTER YOU LET HIM LIVE.

I BELIEVE HE FELL IN WITH AN EARTH-BRED TROLLOP AFTER I PASSED ON HIS OFFER TO ACCOMPANY HIM.

HAD I KNOWN WHAT HE WAS UP TO AND HOW NEGATIVELY IT COULD AFFECT ME, I'D HAVE JOINED HIM IN A HEARTBEAT.

WHICH IS WHAT SHE'S PLANNING ON DOING AS SOON AS SHE GETS "OVER THERE."

IN THAT CASE I'D *HARDLY* HAVE SOUGHT *YOUR* COMPANY, NOW WOULD I?

SOUGHT...? YOU WERE DUMPED IN OUR LAPS!

Pff... SEMANTICS.

HOW YOU CAME TO US IS NOT THE ISSUE. WHY YOU'RE TELLING US ALL OF THIS--

SHE NEEDS US TO FIGHT FOR HER.

THAT AS WELL.

I'M AFRAID I'M NOT AS... WELL CONNECTED AS YOUR UNCLE. I REQUIRE A BEACON. SOMEONE TO HOME IN ON.

SOMEONE OF BLOOD.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "A BEACON"?

THERE ARE COUNTLESS WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS AND SO ON AND SO FORTH.

WITHOUT A BEACON--AN ANCHOR, IF YOU PREFER-- I WOULD FIND MYSELF HOPELESSLY LOST AS SOON AS THE SPELL WAS CAST.

WHO KNOWS WHAT FESTERING DEN OF INIQUITY I MIGHT FIND MYSELF TRAPPED IN.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A REALM WHEREIN ALL OF THE HEROES WEAR TINY PANTIES OVER THEIR TROUSERS?

SHE'S MAKING THIS UP AS SHE GOES ALONG.

AND YOU THINK ONE OF ***US*** IS CONNECTED TO THIS BEACON... THIS PERSON?

BY BLOOD?

I KNOW SO.

AND ***HOW*** DO YOU KNOW THIS?

BECAUSE OTHERWISE THE ENCHANTMENT WOULD NOT WORK.

*#@€#!! SHE BLIND-SIDED US! SHE WAS SILENT-CONJURI--

MOM!?

ADAM!?

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME...

BENES
2013
ALEJANDRO SICAT

JUSTICE DENIED

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Cover Art by Ed Benes, Alejandro Sicat & Randy Mayor

GREENWICH VILLAGE, PLANET EARTH

The Fortune-telling Parlor of Madame Xanadu

I AM PRINCE ADAM OF ETERNIA - KNOWN TO SOME AS HE-MAN.

I CAME HERE IN SEARCH OF MY WORST ENEMY. THE LAST THING I EXPECTED TO FIND WAS

MOM! YOU'RE ALIVE!

NOT FOR MUCH LONGER AT THIS RATE!

LESS *TALKING*, MORE *KILLING!*

Missed you, too, *Teela.*

CHOOM

SKREEK--

THERE'S NOTHING *TO* KILL -- THESE RAT-THINGS ARE JUST *PROJECTIONS.* BUT WITH THE RIGHT SORT OF *PRISM...*

SOMETHING'S *WRONG.* IT OUGHT TO BE SUCKING 'EM *IN!*

AND SURELY IT *WOULD,* WERE THESE MAGICKS FROM *YOUR* REALM.

LUCKY FOR YOU, I KNOW THEIR SOURCE ALL TOO WELL...

FWASH

...AND IT WILL TAKE THE BEST OF *BOTH* WORLDS TO *DISPEL* THEM.

STREWTH--!

WELL, THAT WAS... *INTERESTING.*

INDEED, ***JOHN CONSTANTINE.*** AND IF THE LEGENDS ABOUT YOU ARE TRUE, HOW MUCH ***MORE*** MIGHT WE ACCOMPLISH?

AH, YES. YOUR ***QUEEN*** THERE MENTIONED I'M SOME SORT OF STORYBOOK CHARACTER WHERE YOU COME FROM.

WHICH IS FUNNY, CONSIDERING ***ETERNIA*** IS AS MYTHICAL TO US AS ***OZ,*** OR ***SHANGRI-LA.***

I DO NOT RECOGNIZE THOSE NAMES, BUT YOU WILL FIND LORD SKELETOR ALL TOO ***REAL.***

IS THAT *AFFECTION* I HEAR IN YOUR VOICE? DON'T TELL ME THE MONSTER STEALING EARTH'S MAGIC IS ACTUALLY YOUR ***BOYFRIEND?***

SKELETOR IS ***MANY*** THINGS, BUT "BOY" AND "FRIEND" ARE NOT AMONG THEM.

SO WHAT ***ARE*** YOU DOING IN THIS STRANGE AND JOYLESS REALM?

EARTH'S NOT ***THAT*** BAD, ADAM. I WAS ***BORN*** HERE, AFTER ALL.

MOTHER... YOU MEAN... THIS IS EARTH...

AND HOW, PRAY TELL, DOES AN ALL-AMERICAN GAL BECOME QUEEN OF NEVERLAND?

"I WAS AN *ASTRONAUT,* MISTER CONSTANTINE. MY SHIP SOMEHOW CROSSED THE DIMENSIONAL VEIL AND CRASH-LANDED ON ETERNIA.

"THEN I MET *KING RANDOR* AND REALIZED FATE HAD STRANDED ME RIGHT WHERE I *BELONG.*"

AND I'D BE AT YOUR FATHER'S SIDE RIGHT NOW IF SKELETOR HADN'T SOMEHOW REWRITTEN MY MEMORIES AND *STRANDED* ME HERE.

THE VILLAIN DID THE SAME TO US *ALL* BACK HOME, USING AN ARTIFACT CALLED THE *SKULL OF POWER.**

OUR MEMORIES RETURNED WHEN I RECLAIMED MY *SWORD,* BUT THEN WE COULDN'T FIND YOU *ANYWHERE,* AND WE FEARED THE WORST.

*SEE HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE VOL. 1.

AND WITH NO WAY TO RETURN TO YOU, *I* WAS BEGINNING TO FEAR I'D NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN. BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE COME FOR ME...

ACTUALLY, WE CAME FOR SKELETOR. ONLY *HIS* POWER CAN HELP US RETAKE OUR WORLD FROM HORDAK AND HIS ARMIES.

HORDAK?! GOOD LORD, THESE *ARE* DESPERATE TIMES...

JUST DON'T EXPECT SKELETOR TO BE HAPPY TO SEE YOU, *EVIL-LYN.* IT SEEMS HE'S FOUND A *NEW* PARTNER THESE DAYS.

WHO?

I'M NOT SURE. SHE'S *YOUNGER* THAN YOU, THOUGH. *PRETTIER,* TOO -- THOUGH THAT'S NOT SAYING MUCH.

FEEL FREE TO HAVE YOUR CATFIGHT BACK WHERE YOU *CAME* FROM.

JUST TAKE YOUR "SKELETOR" *WITH* YOU BEFORE HE DRAINS EARTH'S MYSTICAL *LIFE-FORCE.*

WHERE *IS* SKELETOR, ANYWAY?

THE JUSTICE LEAGUE SATELLITE

INTRUDER ALERT! INTRUDER ALERT!

WHO COULD HAVE MADE IT *UP* HERE?

MAYBE SOMEONE IN A SHIP? THE *TELEPORTER* DIDN'T ACTIVATE.

WHOEVER IT IS, THEY'RE ABOUT TO BE VERY, VERY *SORRY.*

OH BRAVE NEW WORLD THAT HAS SUCH PEOPLE IN IT.

WHAT IS THAT, *SHAKESPEARE...?*

OH, I AM NO SHAKER OF SPEARS -- NOR A RATTLER OF SABERS.

I AM THE *DOOM* OF ALL WHO DARE OPPOSE ME.

I AM SKELETOR.

WHAT YOU ARE IS *TRESPASSING.*

AND NOW YOU'RE GOING IN A *CELL.*

YOUR CONFIDENCE IS BORN OF *IGNORANCE,* BUT I KNOW ALL ABOUT *YOU,* "SUPER-MAN."

YOU HAVE *TWO WEAKNESSES.* ONE OF THEM IS *MAGIC...*

...AND THAT MAKES YOU MY *PLAYTHING!*

SHRAK!

Whung!

NOT OFF TO A GREAT START HERE.

OKAY, YOU HAVE OUR ATTENTION. WHAT DO YOU *WANT?*

SKREEEE

ETERNIA

SCAN CONFIRMS TRACE MYSTICAL ENERGIES. SOURCE: *EVIL-LYN.*

THESE *ARE* THE COORDINATES FROM WHICH THEY DEPARTED.

SNFF SNRFF

REMARKABLE. I DIDN'T KNOW *ROBOTO* HAD SUCH A SENSOR.

IT'S NEW. I *UPGRADED* HIM WITH TECHNOLOGY WE CAPTURED FROM *THE HORDE.*

IF WE'RE TO TAKE BACK ETERNIA, WE MUST TURN OUR ENEMIES' STRENGTHS *AGAINST* THEM.

JUST TAKE CARE NOT TO *BECOME* THE ENEMY ON YOUR WAY TO *DEFEATING* THEM.

UNDERSTOOD, *MOSS MAN,* BUT THE QUESTION REMAINS: DID ADAM AND TEELA GO WITH HER ON PURPOSE, OR DID EVIL-LYN TRICK THEM?

EITHER WAY, WE'LL NOT STAND IDLE WHILE YOUR *DAUGHTER* MAY BE IN DANGER.

TEELA USUALLY *IS* THE DANGER.

WE *KNOW* SHE'S TOUGH, DUNCAN. SO IS HE-MAN. BUT ARE WE REALLY GOING TO SIT HERE AND JUST HOPE FOR THE BEST?

YOU KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT, *STRATOS.*

THIS HORDE *DIMENSIONAL TRANSPONDER* SHOULD TRACE EVIL-LYN'S ENERGY SIGNATURE BEFORE IT FADES COMPLETELY...

SNIKT

"...AND THEN WE'LL FIND OUT JUST WHAT HELL-HOLE SHE LED THEM TO."

SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THE WARRIOR WHO LIVES *HERE* CAN HELP US FIND SKELETOR?

I WAS HOPING HE'D BE HOME SO YOU COULD JUDGE HIM FOR YOURSELF.

JOKER

WHOEVER HE IS, I LIKE HIS *STYLE.*

LET'S GET *OUT* OF HERE. I THINK HE KILLS *KIDS*--!

WARNING: INCOMING TELEPORT.

VVV VVVVVVVVVmmmmm--

!

SKREEEEEEEE

FWASH

SKREEEEE

DEMON BEGONE!

CHANK

SKREEEEEEEE

=>...HFF<=
=>...HFF<=...WHO THE HELL ARE *YOU?*

AND HOW'D YOU *FIND* THE BATCAVE?!

SORRY, MATE, BUT I LED 'EM HERE.

FIGURED YOU WOULDN'T MIND, SINCE IT'S ONLY *SEVEN BILLION LIVES* AT STAKE.

YOU FIGURED *WRONG,* CONSTANTINE.

FAPD

DO YOU SEE ANY *ASHTRAYS* IN HERE?

NOW *EXPLAIN* YOURSELVES.

This is the smartest man in the realm? He looks like Hordak's court jester.

BELIEVE ME, TEELA, THE *BATMAN* IS ONE OF EARTH'S GREATEST *HEROES*--

--NOT TO MENTION ITS BEST *DETECTIVE.* AND WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET TRACKING DOWN SKELE--

SKROOM

THERE YOU ARE.

THE *MASTER* WANTS YOU TO JOIN US.

MASTER?

COMPUTER! OPEN KRYPTONITE VAULT! ACCESS CODE: SEVEN-FIVE—

-THREEEE...?!

Ungh!

THUD

Guh--!

THUMP

I DON'T KNOW WHICH IS *MORE* DISAPPOINTING: THAT YOU WOULD TURN YOUR *BACK* ON THE MASTER...

...OR THAT WE FIND YOU *CONSPIRING* WITH HIS BITTEREST *ENEMY.*

TAKE THEM!

REMEMBER: THE MASTER WANTS THE MAGES *ALIVE!*

ON IT.

DON'T STRUGGLE OR I'LL *HURT* YOU.

ADAM--!

Y'THINK I'LL BE THAT *EASY?*

STANG

CHOOM

I HOPE YOU'RE *NOT!*

KLUDD

whung!

I *HAVE* THE MAGES!

FOCUS ON THE *BIG BLONDE!* MASTER SAYS *HE'S* THE REAL THREAT.

ESPECIALLY TO THOSE WHO LAY HANDS ON MY *MOTHER!*

URK!

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE *DONE* THAT...

THE MASTER WANTS YOUR HEAD!

LARK

WHO IS THIS CREATURE? SOME LOCAL DEMIGOD?

HIS POWER SEEMS AS VAST AS ANY I'VE EVER FACED!

whung

THOOM

FEELS LIKE KICKING A MOUNTAIN!

HEH. YOU'RE STRONG.

GOOD.

I'M SICK OF ALWAYS HOLDING BACK.

SKROOM

CREATOR'S GRACE, HE'S TRYING HIS BEST TO SLAY ME--!

FSHHHH

ARHHHH!!!

AND IF I DIE HERE EVERYONE DIES

SEVEN BILLION LIVES ON THIS WORLD ALONE, PLUS EVERYONE I LOVE BACK HOME

->...HKK<-

->...KK...<-

NO MATTER WHAT I CAN'T LET THIS FLAME-EYED MONSTER STOP ME FROM SAVING THEM ALL

NO MATTER WHAT

I'M GONNA RIP OUT YOUR SPINE AND--

-:--hkk:-

SKLUTCH!

I TAKE NO JOY IN KILLING, BUT IF I MUST TRADE ONE LIFE FOR BILLIONS, SO BE IT.

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, THIS MADMAN IN BLUE LEFT ME NO OTHER CHOICE!

H-how...?

THUMP

WH...WHAT JUST HAPPENED...?

OH, MY GOD. SUPERMAN--?!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

DARK ORKO

Keith Giffen Tony Bedard
Writers

Dexter Soy (pgs. 1-10, 8, 16-20)
Derlis Santacruz & Andres Ponce (pgs. 7, 11-15)
Artists

Cover Art by **Ed Benes, Alejandro Sicat & Randy Mayor**

WAYNE MANOR, GOTHAM CITY

KAL...?!

GOOD GOD, THEY KILLED *SUPERMAN!*

I... DIDN'T *WANT* TO...

YOU PEOPLE ATTACKED *US.*

IT'S *TRUE,* MY FRIENDS: YOU WEREN'T YOURSELVES A MOMENT AGO. YOU KEPT SAYING "THE MASTER" SENT YOU AFTER US.

TRY TO REMEMBER. YOU *MUST* HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THIS *SKELETOR* BLOKE THAT HE-MAN AND HIS MATES ARE LOOKING FOR.

STOP TRYING TO CONFUSE ME, *JOHN CONSTANTINE.*

I DON'T KNOW *ANYONE* NAMED "SKELETOR," BUT I DAMNED WELL *SAW* WHO STABBED MY MAN THROUGH THE *HEART!*

THINK, DIANA. THERE WAS A SKULL-FACED INTRUDER ON THE JUSTICE LEAGUE SATELLITE, REMEMBER?

I WAS THERE. I SAW HIM.

THEN... THESE ARE YOUR FRIENDS, BATMAN?

CREATOR'S GRACE--! HAD I KNOWN THAT, I WOULD NEVER HAVE...

LOOK. I WON'T FIGHT YOU PEOPLE ANYMORE.

CLEARLY, YOU WERE INNOCENT PAWNS. THE FAULT WAS MINE IN NOT RECOGNIZING THIS SOONER.

I AM PREPARED TO SURRENDER WITHOUT FURTHER BLOODSHED.

AND WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE YOU?!

SHA-

KOOM

BECAUSE I GIVE YOU THE WORD OF A *PRINCE OF ETERNIA.*

NEITHER I, NOR MY SUBJECTS, SHALL OFFER RESISTANCE.

TEELA, EVIL-LYN, DO I MAKE MYSELF *CLEAR?*

ADAM, *NO--!*

HE WAS TRYING TO *KILL* YOU!

IDEALISTIC FOOL...

EARTH AND WATER, HEED MY CALL!

ELEMENTS, I NEED YOU ALL!

FIRE, JUMP INTO MY GRASP...

STREWTH--!

...WITH WIND RESTORE TO ME--

FWASH

--MY STAFF!

DON'T, EVIL-LYN. PRINCE ADAM GAVE HIS WORD!

HE'S NOT MY PRINCE.

FWASH

METROPOLIS

FLASH

WE'RE *SAFE* NOW.

YOU'RE WELCOME.

SAFE FOR THE MOMENT, PERHAPS.

BUT ONCE WORD SPREADS ABOUT *SUPERMAN'S DEATH,* THE ENTIRE WORLD WILL *HUNT* US.

SUPERMAN

THAT WAS STUPID, EVIL-LYN! I COULD HAVE *REASONED* WITH THEM. NOW YOU'VE MADE US *FUGITIVES.*

WE HAVEN'T TIME TO *WASTE* ON "REASON." A FEW MORE DAYS AND SKELETOR WILL MAKE A *HUSK* OF THIS WORLD.

SINCE WHEN DO *YOU* CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO *EARTH?*

I *DON'T.*

BUT IT MATTERS TO *YOU,* AND AS MUCH AS IT PAINS ME TO ADMIT IT, I *NEED* YOU.

JUST IN CASE LORD SKELETOR ISN'T SO HAPPY TO SEE ME.

AGREED: THE SOONER YOU ALL SOD OFF BACK TO *ETERNIA,* THE BETTER.

JOHN AND I SHALL SUMMON HELP FROM OUR *ASSOCIATES* WHILE YOU PEOPLE LOCATE SKELETOR.

WAYNE MANOR

IT'S NO GOOD: MY RING CAN'T TRACE THAT WITCH'S SPELL. WE'LL HAVE TO SPREAD OUT AND FIND THEM THE HARD WAY.

FOR THE LAST TIME, HAL, YOU'RE FOCUSING ON THE *WRONG* TARG--

FSHHH

AH-!

KAL, *NO!*

SHHHHHHH

DON'T LEAVE ME--!

SHHHHHH

—THE HELL JUST *HAPPENED?!*

I DON'T KNOW, BUT HE'S *GONE.* I'M NOT PICKING UP EVEN A TRACE OF D.N.A.

MUST BE A *CURSE* ON HE-MAN'S MAGIC SWORD...

NONE OF YOU ARE THINKING CLEARLY YET.

CAN YOU REMEMBER WHY SUPERMAN ATTACKED THE BATCAVE?

IN YOUR WILDEST DREAMS, WOULD HE EVER DO SUCH A THING?

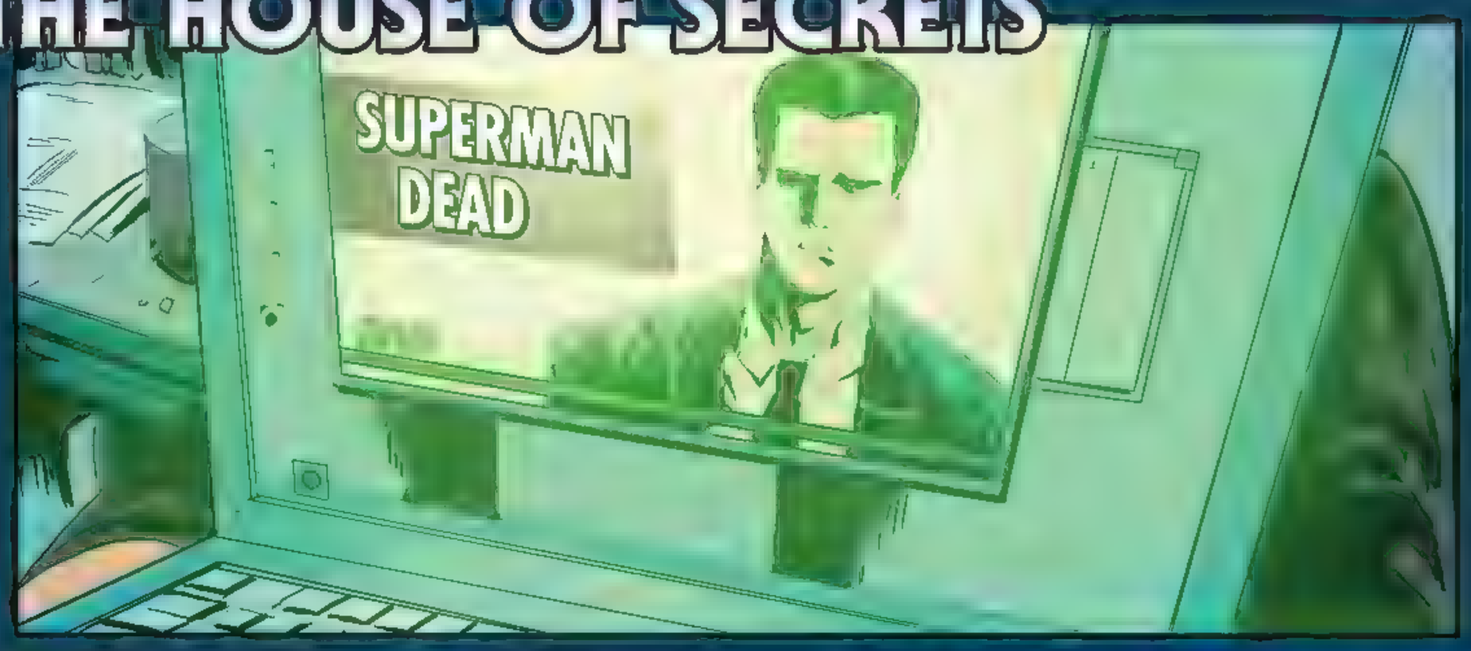
WE'RE WASTING TIME HERE. WE SHOULD BE HUNTING DOWN HIS MURDERERS.

YEAH, THEY CAN'T JUST RUN LOOSE.

WELL, BATMAN, ARE YOU COMING OR NOT?

>HNK GET OFF MY LAWN.

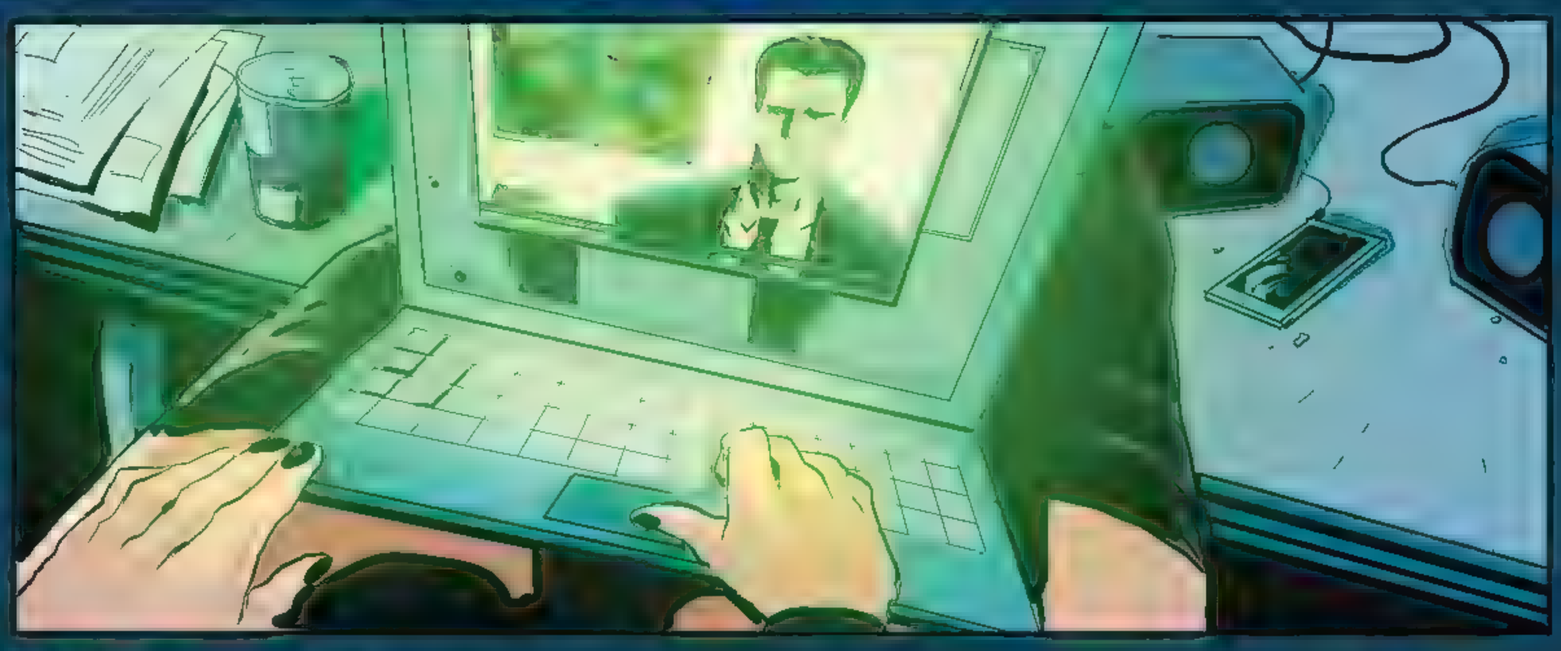
THE HOUSE OF SECRETS



...A NATION REELING FROM THE TRAGIC NEWS THAT **SUPERMAN** WAS KILLED IN BATTLE LAST NIGHT.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED TO REPORT ANY SIGHTINGS OF THE SUSPECTS, WHO ARE SAID TO RESEMBLE THESE ARTIST RENDERINGS.

WARNING: THEY ARE ARMED AND HIGHLY DANGEROUS.



YOU MUST BE *LOVING* THIS -- IT'S ON EVERY NEWS SITE NOW.

PULL UP A SEAT, I'LL MAKE POPCORN.

THIS IS THE PART WHERE YOU THANK ME FOR HOOKING UP THIS DUMP WITH BROADBAND.

DID I NOT *PREDICT* WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN I SET MAN-OF-STEEL AT HE-MAN'S THROAT?

MY NEPHEW IS ABOVE ALL THINGS A *WARRIOR.* HE WOULD STOP AT NOTHING TO SAVE BOTH WORLDS.

I *KNEW* HIS WARRIOR'S CODE WOULD ILL SERVE HIM IN THIS REALM.

"AND YET..."

AND YET *WHAT?*

AND YET YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY DOING A TOUCHDOWN DANCE HERE, SO WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU AND YOUR "DARK MASTER" HAVE A FIGHT OR SOMETHING?

SKELETOR BOWS TO NO MASTER.

RIGHT! RIGHT! *SORRY!*

WHAT MATTERS IS YOU *KNEW,* RIGHT? EVERY CAPE AND COWL ON EARTH IS OUT FOR THEIR BLOOD NOW! YOU *NAILED* IT!

INDEED.

THE FOOLS WILL WASTE THEIR ENERGIES HUNTING MY NEPHEW WHILE MY MAGIC SIPHONS DRAIN EARTH OF ITS MYSTICAL LIFE FORCE.

NO ONE CAN STOP ME NOW...

ETERNIA

IT'S *WORKING!*

OF *COURSE* IT'S WORKING.

THE *HORDE* USES THESE INFERNAL MACHINES TO INVADE OUR WORLD FROM THEIR DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS AND KILL OUR PEOPLE.

NOW, WE'LL USE ONE TO FIND AND *SAVE* THEM.

STILL, IT'S A *ONE-WAY* JOURNEY.

IF WE CANNOT FIND ADAM, TEELA AND EVIL-LYN ON THE OTHER SIDE, I'M NOT SURE *HOW* WE'LL BE ABLE TO RETURN.

SO IF ANY OF YOU WISH TO REMAIN BEHIND, I'LL NOT JUDGE YOU THE WORSE FOR IT.

GREENWICH VILLAGE, NEW YORK CITY

ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT THIS PLACE. YOU SHOULD *SEE* THE WEIRDOES COMING IN AND OUT OF HERE.

FWASH

AHH--!

FEAR NOT, GOOD PEOPLE! WE ARE BUT WARRIORS OF ETERNIA, SEEKING LOST COMRADES.

HAVE YOU SEEN ANYONE *OUT OF THE ORDINARY* LATELY?

UM...

FWASH!

GROWRR!!!

HELP!

DON'T EAT ME!

HOLD, SIR. I WOULD KNOW WHERE WE CAN FIND THIS REALM'S *DEFENDERS*.

WHU--?!

YOUR WORLD'S GREATEST WARRIORS. WHERE ARE THEY?

Y-YOU MEAN THE *JUSTICE LEAGUE*?!

IF THEY CHAMPION JUSTICE, THEN THEIR *AID* IS WHAT WE NEED.

THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY
Headquarters of Justice League Dark

SO WHAT YOU'RE *SAYING*, CONSTANTINE, IS THAT YOU EXPECT US TO *HELP* THE PEOPLE WHO KILLED SUPERMAN...?

NOW WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?

JOHN'S TELLING THE *TRUTH*, DEADMAN. THIS WHOLE TRAGIC MESS WAS ENGINEERED BY A BEING CALLED *SKELETOR.*

ALL THAT *HE-MAN* WANTS IS TO TAKE HIM BACK HOME BEFORE HE KILLS THE LOT OF *US.*

I DON'T KNOW. COLONEL TREVOR ALREADY HAS HIS *JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA* HUNTING SUPERMAN'S KILLERS.

I SHOULD BE OUT THERE *WITH* THEM...

THOOM

I, TOO, AM...NOT INCLINED TO TRUST THE WORD...OF CONSTANTINE.

AFTER ALL... *LYING* IS PRETTY MUCH...JOHN'S *SUPERPOWER.*

ENOUGH **BICKERING!**

WHETHER THESE PEOPLE CAME TO MURDER SUPERMAN OR SAVE THE WORLD, THEY MUST BE **FOUND!**

METROPOLIS

OKAY, THIS ENERGY SIGNATURE IS DEFINITELY A *MATCH* FOR THE ONE LANTERN JORDAN SCANNED AT WAYNE MANOR.

THEN THEY WERE HERE. FAN OUT AND SEARCH EVERY BLOCK IN A TEN-MILE RADIUS.

MANHUNTER, SEE IF YOU CAN SCAN TELEPATHICALLY FOR THEIR THOUGHTS.

WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO *TRACK* THEM, BUT–

PERHAPS *WE* CAN BE OF SERVICE IN THAT REGARD.

AFTER ALL, WE TRACED THE ECHO OF EVIL-LYN'S SORCERY HERE.

WHO THE...?

I AM *MAN-AT-ARMS,* GENERAL OF THE GUARD IN KING RANDOR'S COURT.

YOU ARE THE *LEAGUE OF JUSTICE,* YES?

WE REQUIRE ASSISTANCE FINDING OUR *ALLIES.*

DOES THE NAME *HE-MAN* RING A BELL?

THEY'RE *WITH* THE KILLERS.

TAKE THEM!

FOR SUPERMAN!

THE HOUSE OF SECRETS

SO THIS, UM, *PARTNER* OF YOURS...?

WHY WON'T HE *SHOW* HIMSELF? WHAT'S THE *STORY* WITH THAT GUY?

"GUY" HARDLY *BEGINS* TO DESCRIBE WHAT HE IS.

HE WAS *OVERLOOKED* BY EVERYONE.

EVEN I FAILED TO RECOGNIZE HIS TRUE POTENTIAL UNTIL IT WAS FAR TOO LATE.

AND NOW I FIND MYSELF ALLIED WITH AN ENTITY WHO PROMISES TO HELP ME TAKE ETERNIA FROM HORDAK, BUT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY TRY TO TAKE IT FOR *HIMSELF.*

AND ETERNIA IS *MINE* BY RIGHT!

EH?

FWASH

I WOULD HAVE A *WORD* WITH YOU, MY MINION...

HOW MUCH *LONGER* MUST I WAIT FOR YOU TO COMPLETE YOUR TASK?

EVERYTHING IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN.

IN LESS THAN TWO DAYS, WE SHALL POSSESS *ALL* OF EARTH'S MAGIC AND THE PLANET WILL *CRUMBLE*...

...BUT NOT BEFORE WE ENJOY THE *SPECTACLE* OF EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES *SLAYING* HE-MAN AND HIS TEDIOUS FRIENDS.

YES. THE SO-CALLED "MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE."

THEY ALWAYS *LAUGHED* AT ME, YOU KNOW?

TELL ME, SKELETOR, WHO'S LAUGHING *NOW?*

BELLS
2013

WORLDS COLLIDE

Keith Giffen Tony Bedard Writers

Pop Mhan Artist

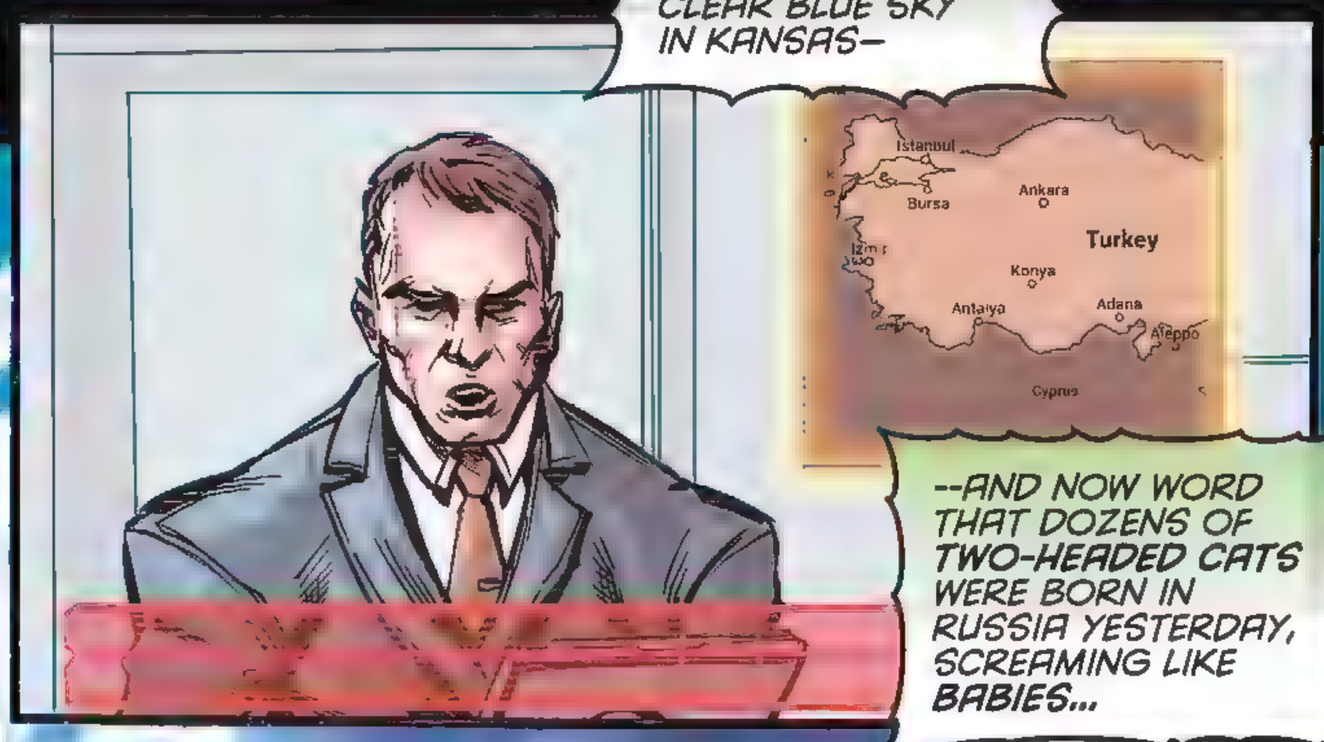
Cover Art by Ed Benes, Alejandro Sicat & Randy Mayor

WELCOME BACK TO GOTHAM NEWS NETWORK, AND THE WORST WEEK IN RECENT MEMORY JUST KEEPS GETTING **WORSE...**

STILL REELING FROM THE SHOCK OF SUPERMAN'S **DEATH,** WE ARE NOW GETTING REPORTS OF **MAJOR DISASTERS** ACROSS THE GLOBE...

A MAJOR **EARTHQUAKE** IN TURKEY. **VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS** ALONG THE PACIFIC RIM. A **TSUNAMI** IN MALAYSIA...

...NOT TO MENTION LIVE **BULLFROGS** RAINING OUT OF A CLEAR BLUE SKY IN KANSAS—



--AND NOW WORD THAT DOZENS OF **TWO-HEADED CATS** WERE BORN IN RUSSIA YESTERDAY, SCREAMING LIKE **BABIES...**

THE ORKNEY ISLANDS

United Kingdom

YOU'RE ***SURE*** IT'S HERE, EVIL-LYN?

I DIDN'T CONJURE US THIS FAR FOR ***NOTHING,*** PRINCE ADAM.

Oh, this can't be good...

IT LOOKS LIKE THE ***END TIMES.***

THAT'S BECAUSE IT ***IS.***

SO THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A WORLD IS BLED DRY OF *MAGIC?*

INDEED. YOUR MOTHER'S PRECIOUS BIRTH-WORLD HAS BEGUN ITS *DEATH THROES.* LEFT UNCHECKED, SKELETOR WILL *DESTROY* IT.

Not that it would be any great *loss.*

WHAT WE SEEK IS OVER *HERE...*

A MYSTIC ENERGY *SYPHON.* DEFINITELY SKELETOR'S HANDIWORK.

I COULD *FEEL* IT FROM HALF A WORLD AWAY.

SO WE *DESTROY* IT, RIGHT?

DOING SO WOULD ONLY *ALERT* SKELETOR THAT WE ARE ON HIS TRAIL.

HOWEVER, THE SYPHON *TRANSMITS* THE MAGIC IT COLLECTS.

I CAN *TRACE* ITS SIGNAL TO SKELETOR'S CURRENT LOCATION.

THEN *HURRY.* IF *WE* DON'T STOP MY UNCLE, WHO *WILL?*

METROPOLIS

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA! TAKE THESE INVADERS ALIVE!

RROWLFR!!

SHWAT

~Urk~

BUT WE CAME TO YOU IN PEACE!

TELL THAT TO SUPERMAN!

WHOOOSH

WHO IS THIS "SUPERMAN" YOU KEEP TALKING ABOUT?

PAFT

HE WAS THE BEST OF US! YOUR FRIENDS MURDERED HIM!

IF YOU'RE TRULY INNOCENT, JUST SURRENDER!

ZING

ILLOGICAL. YOU ATTACKED US. WE ACT ONLY IN SELF-DEFENSE.

THIS IS COLONEL STEVE TREVOR CALLING EVERYONE ON THE JUSTICE LEAGUE COMM SYSTEM.

WE HAVE ENGAGED THE ENEMY!

COAST CITY

DIANA! DO YOU READ ME?

I'M HERE, STEVE. WE'RE *ALL* SEARCHING FOR THIS SO-CALLED *HE-MAN* AND HIS *ACCOMPLICES.*

SWITCH TO **VISUAL.** I WANT YOU TO SEE **WHO** WE'RE FIGHTING.

ARE THESE YOUR HOSTILES?

THEY LOOK SIMILAR, BUT...*NO.*

BUT THEY TALKED ABOUT "HE-MAN" LIKE HE'S A *FRIEND.*

YOU THINK THEY'RE *REINFORCEMENTS* FROM WHEREVER THE KILLERS *CAME* FROM?

*I'M ON MY WAY, STEVE. TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY AND WE'LL GET THE **TRUTH** WITH MY GOLDEN LASSO...*

THE BATCAVE
Gotham

LUNCH, MASTER BRUCE...

AH. THE JUSTICE LEAGUE MONITOR SHOWS MULTIPLE *MISSED CALLS* FROM COLONEL TREVOR.

ANY REASON YOU'RE NOT *ANSWERING?*

THE WHOLE HERO COMMUNITY IS OUT FOR BLOOD, ALFRED.

THEY'RE CHASING THESE STRANGERS WITH *NO UNDERSTANDING* OF WHAT TRULY HAPPENED.

BEGGING YOUR PARDON, BUT ISN'T IT *OBVIOUS?*

WHAT *MORE* DO THEY NEED TO SEE?

I'LL SHOW YOU...

VREEEEEEEP

THERE. A FEW MINUTES AFTER HE WAS STABBED, SUPERMAN'S CORPSE SUDDENLY *DECOMPOSES* IN LESS THAN TEN SECONDS.

I'VE CHECKED THAT SPOT WITH AN ELECTRON MICROSCOPE. THERE IS *NOTHING* LEFT OF SUPERMAN. NO D.N.A., NO CLOTHING...

NOTHING.

THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME WONDER.

IT'S TOO *CONVENIENT,* HOW THE EVIDENCE JUST VANISHED - AS IF SOMEONE DIDN'T WANT ME EXAMINING THE *CORPSE.*

YOU THINK SOMEONE IS *OBFUSCATING* THE FACTS ABOUT SUPERMAN'S DEATH?

I THINK MAYBE THAT WASN'T SUPERMAN *AT ALL.*

MASTER BRUCE, HE WAS MORE THAN A COLLEAGUE. HE WAS YOUR *FRIEND.* AND YOU DON'T ALLOW MANY OF THOSE.

COULD IT BE YOU'RE SIMPLY IN DENIAL? I MEAN, *WHO* WOULD STAND TO *PROFIT* FROM STAGING SUCH A HOAX?

OF COURSE--!

LUNCH WILL HAVE TO *WAIT,* ALFRED. THERE'S SOMEONE I NEED TO *SEE...*

THE HOUSE OF SECRETS

UNNH... S'LIKE A *HANGOVER* THAT JUST GETS WORSE AND WORSE AND *WORSE...*

...THE MORE YOUR *MAGIC BATTERY* CHARGES UP, THE MORE I FEEL LIKE *PUKING.*

DID YOU THINK, BLACK ALICE, THAT YOU COULD *OUTLIVE* THIS BENIGHTED LITTLE WORLD OF YOURS?

I, UH...KINDA HOPED MAYBE YOU'D *SPARE* ME. YOU KNOW, FOR *HELPING...?*

FWASH

YOUR *DEATH* SERVES A GREATER PURPOSE, CHILD.

ORKO!

EARTH IS NOTHING BUT A SACRIFICE UPON MY ALTAR. A MEANS TOWARD MY CONQUEST OF ETERNIA!

I SHALL REMAKE ETERNIA AS I HAVE REMADE *SKELETOR!* AS I *MYSELF* HAVE BEEN REBORN INTO THE COLLECTIVE!

AS IT IS ON MY HOME DIMENSION OF THE *TROLLA....*

I HAVE MADE *THRALLS* OF MY ENTIRE RACE!

I AM THE *MULTITUDE!*

SO TOO SHALL IT BE THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE!

YES, EARTH WILL DIE, AND ETERNIA WILL FALL!

SUCH IS THE WAY OF THE *HORDE!*

I MAY NOT BE AROUND FOR MUCH LONGER, SKELLY, BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME NEITHER WILL *YOU.*

That is the first intelligent thing you've said.

METROPOLIS

FIGHT ON, COMRADES!

WE MAY BE STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND, BUT FOR ETERNIA'S SAKE WE *MUST* TRIUMPH!

YOU'RE A *SLIPPERY* ONE!

I WAS TRAINED FROM BIRTH BY THE SKY-MASTERS OF AVION TO--

KRAK

SHOULD'VE TRAINED YOU TO *TALK* LESS.

HEAR MY THOUGHTS, BEAST: DO NOT FORCE ME TO HARM YOU.

WE NEED NOT BE ENEMIES IF THESE PEOPLE MISLED YOU...

GRRROWR!!

SWACK

SHUK SHK

POIT

SHWK

SAVAGE CREATURE, I TRIED TO WARN YOU!

HSSSssss--!

STAY PUT, PLANT-GUY.

DON'T PRESS YOUR LUCK AGAINST MY *POWER RING.*

I AM KNOWN AS *MOSS MAN.* AND THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO WIELD THE *GREEN.*

KREEEK

SKRASH

REEENK

HEY--!

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT...

VRRRRRRR--

SHLP SHRP SKLUSHH

UHRRRRR

STOP THIS MADNESS... GREEN LANTERN.

KLATCH

HEY, I'VE SEEN YOUR FILE. YOU'RE THE SWAMP THING, RIGHT?

WHY ARE YOU OBSTRUCTING JUSTICE?

THIS IS...FAR FROM JUSTICE.

AND YOUR CONSTRUCT... IS IN VERY POOR TASTE.

HAWKMAN, STOP.

FRANKENSTEIN--?! WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?

KLANG

...AND HE'S GOT SOMETHING MARTIANS *DEFINITELY* DON'T LIKE!

TWANG

HANG ON, HAWKMAN, I'M--->

DEADMAN HERE. I HIJACKED THEIR ARCHER...

FWOOSH!!

SQUEEE-!

COLONEL TREVOR! CALL OFF THE DOGS!

THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE, *BLACK ORCHID?* DID YOU BRING "JUSTICE LEAGUE DARK"?

I HAVE NEW INTEL. TELL YOUR PEOPLE TO STAND DOWN!

WE ARE MAKING *ARRESTS* HERE! TELL *YOUR* PEOPLE TO BACK OFF.

THAT IS AN *ORDER* FROM YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER!

WHAP

SORRY, COLONEL, BUT TODAY I ANSWER TO A *HIGHER* AUTHORITY!

FWASH

FWASH

FWASH

NOW!

FWASH

UM... WHAT JUST *HAPPENED?*

GOTHAM CITY

FWASH

FWASH

FWASH

FWASH

I AM *MAN-AT-ARMS.* IDENTIFY YOURSELVES!

FRIENDS? OR FOES?

FRIENDS. CALL ME *MADAME XANADU.*

IT WAS I WHO CAST THE SPELL THAT BROUGHT YOU HERE. *BARELY.*

APOLOGIES, BUT I'M NOT FEELING *WELL* TODAY...

NONE OF US ARE, LUV.

AT LEAST, NONE OF US WHO CAN FEEL THE WORLD *BLEEDING OUT.*

THE IMPORTANT BIT IS WE *RESCUED* OUR GUESTS FROM DEAR OLD *ETERNIA.*

FSHHH

WHAT DO *YOU* KNOW OF MY HOMELAND?

AND WHERE ARE MY *DAUGHTER* AND *HE-MAN?*

STILL SEARCHING FOR *SKELETOR,* I HOPE.

BECAUSE HE *FRAMED* THEM FOR A CRIME THAT ACTUALLY *NEVER HAPPENED,* ACCORDING TO TALL, DARK AND CREEPY HERE.

DON'T CONFUSE THEM, CONSTANTINE.

ALL THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT SKELETOR SET US ALL AT EACH OTHERS' *THROATS,* MAN-AT-ARMS.

WHICH IS WHY WE NEED TO START WORKING *TOGETHER...*

"YOU SEE, I WAS THE ONLY ONE FROM THE JUSTICE LEAGUE WHO AVOIDED GETTING MIND-CONTROLLED BY SKELETOR.

"I THINK HE SENT THEM TO ATTACK HE-MAN SO THEY'D ALL BE TOO BUSY FIGHTING TO PREVENT HIM FROM DRAINING EARTH'S MAGIC.

"AND TO MAKE SURE EVERY OTHER HERO ON EARTH JOINED THE HUNT, HE PLAYED A TRICK ON **ALL** OF US...

"...HE REPLACED SUPERMAN WITH A **FAKE** - SO STRONG IT FOOLED EVEN ME...

"...A MAGICAL PAWN HE COULD **SACRIFICE**, KNOWING WE'D STOP AT NOTHING TO AVENGE THE GREATEST HERO THIS WORLD HAS EVER SEEN..."

"BUT NOW IT'S TIME FOR US TO **STOP** DANCING TO SKELETOR'S TUNE.

"IT'S TIME TO PULL TOGETHER, SAVE **BOTH** OF OUR WORLDS, AND RESCUE MY BEST FRIEND.

"WHEREVER HE IS."

B.CHANG

WORLDS COLLIDE

Keith Giffen Tony Bedard Writers

Pop Mhan Artist

Cover Art by Bernard Chang

THE HOUSE OF SECRETS

THERE IT IS: ***SKELETOR'S*** PLACE OF POWER. I CAN SENSE HIM WITHIN.

SOMEHOW I EXPECTED A MORE ***IMPRESSIVE*** HIDEOUT.

FROM THIS HOUSE, HE IS SLOWLY ***MURDERING*** YOUR ENTIRE PLANET.

NOW ARE YOU IMPRESSED?

MOTHER, *TEELA*, YOU TWO TRY THE BACK ENTRANCE.

EVIL-LYN AND I WILL GO IN THROUGH THE FRONT.

NOT BEFORE YOU TURN BACK INTO *HE-MAN.*

NO OFFENSE, PRINCE ADAM, BUT YOUR UNCLE WILL PROBABLY BLAST US *ON SIGHT.* WE'RE GONNA NEED YOU AT FULL STRENGTH.

BAD IDEA. IF YOU TRANSFORM NOW, SKELETOR WILL SURELY *SENSE* IT, AND THERE GOES THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.

BEST TO WAIT UNTIL JUST BEFORE WE ENGAGE.

SHE'S RIGHT, TEELA. YOU JUST MAKE SURE TO PROTECT MY MOTHER.

QUEEN MARLENA WILL BE FINE. IT'S *YOU* I'M WORRIED ABOUT.

Evil-Lyn's behaved herself so far, but that *witch* will backstab you in a heartbeat--!

ALL TWELVE *SYPHONS* WE PLACED AROUND THE GLOBE ARE OPERATING PERFECTLY.

EARTH'S MYSTICAL LIFE FORCE IS ALMOST COMPLETELY DRAINED.

IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, YOU AND YOUR WORLD SHALL BE NO MORE.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THIS'LL END ANY BETTER FOR *YOU?*

WE *BOTH* KNOW IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU-KNOW-WHO *DOUBLE-CROSSES* Y–

FWASH

SKELETOR! ARE YOU *BLIND* OR MERELY *INCOMPETENT?*

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, *ORKO?*

THAT'S *LORD ORKO* TO YOU!

YOU'VE FAILED TO NOTICE YOU HAVE *UNWANTED COMPANY* OUTSIDE.

ELIMINATE THEM!

AH. MY *NEPHEW* AND MY ERSTWHILE ALLY.

REST ASSURED, THIS IS NOTHING I CANNOT HANDLE.

I AM NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES. NOT WHEN I'M SO CLOSE TO VICTORY.

NO, *WAIT.* THERE'S NO NEED FOR–

FWOOSH

WHAT IS THAT?

I'M NOT SURE.

DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ONE OF SKELETOR'S SPELLS...

WHAT DID YOU JUST *DO?*

DID YOU NOT RECOGNIZE THE SPELL? IT'S A VARIATION OF THE ONE YOU USED TO *ENSLAVE* THE SO-CALLED "JUSTICE LEAGUE."

"OF COURSE, *MY* VERSION IS MUCH *BIGGER.*"

GOTHAM CITY

...THEN IT IS DECIDED, MAN-OF-BATS. WE *JOIN FORCES* AGAINST SKELETOR.

THAT *SYMBOL* YOU WEAR IS TOO CLOSE TO *HORDAK'S* FOR MY LIKING, BUT--

INCOMING!

FWOOSH

STREWTH! THAT'S SOME *BAD MOJO* TRYING TO GET IN HERE!

BARELY MANAGED TO *SHIELD* US FROM IT.

FROM *WHAT?*

FELT LIKE *MIND-CONTROL*, BUT ON A *MASSIVE* SCALE.

<-SQUARK-> TO ALL WHO HEED THE MASTER'S CALL: PROCEED TO THE ENCLOSED COORDINATES.

THE MASTER'S ENEMIES MUST *DIE!*

THAT'S THE JUSTICE LEAGUE'S GLOBAL EMERGENCY FREQUENCY...

"...THERE'S NO TELLING HOW MANY HEROES MIGHT BE RECEIVING THIS."

ON MY WAY.

"BATMAN, MATE, I DOUBT IT'LL JUST BE THE GOOD GUYS WHO'LL ANSWER THE CALL.

HRRRRRRRR...

"THAT SPELL'S GONNA BRING EVERY BLEEDIN' METAHUMAN ON EARTH TO THE HOUSE OF SECRETS."

"THEN WE'D BETTER MAKE SURE WE GET THERE FIRST."

SKRAK

OMAC-TIVATE!

RKOWRRR!

THE MASTER...

HIS ENEMIES ARE ORION'S ENEMIES!

PREPARE YOURSELF. THERE'S NO TELLING HOW WE'LL BE RECEIVED.

LEAD ON, GALLANT PRINCE.

Or should I say "gallant dunce"?

SKELETOR! I BRING YOU A *GIFT!*

CHOOM

STAND DOWN, EVIL-LYN.

WE SHALL *NEED* THIS FOOL IF WE ARE TO STOP OUR *TRUE* ENEMY.

PAFF

SERIOUSLY?

THIS IS WORSE THAN I THOUGHT.

TEELA WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU.

I TRY NOT TO DISAPPOINT.

BUT *YOU*, SKELETOR? YOU BRING THIS WORLD TO THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION AND YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE SOME *OTHER* FOE IS BEHIND ALL THIS?

WHEN LAST WE MET, YOU SHATTERED MY *HAVOC STAFF* ALONG WITH MY *JAW.*

IF WE *DIDN'T* HAVE A COMMON ENEMY, WOULD I NOT *KILL* YOU ON SIGHT?

RIGHT. THEN TELL ME *WHO* COULD POSSIBLY POSE SUCH A THREAT THAT YOU WOULD SIDE WITH *ME?*

SOMEONE YOU ONCE KNEW AS A FRIEND...

*"EONS AGO, ONE NAME STRUCK TERROR INTO EVERY HEART ACROSS THE COSMOS: **HORDE PRIME.***

*"HIS TRANSCENDENT EVIL LIVES ON TODAY IN HIS SON **HORDAK,** WHO SLEW HIS OWN FATHER AND CLAIMED A GRISLY **TROPHY...***

*"...HORDE PRIME'S ACCURSED **SKULL.***

*"AN ARTIFACT I **HARNESSED** TO ERASE EVERYONE'S MEMORIES AND TAKE OVER ETERNIA."*

WE KNOW WHAT YOU DID ALL TOO WELL, SKELETOR.

NONE OF US COULD REMEMBER WHO WE EVEN *WERE* UNTIL PRINCE ADAM RECLAIMED HIS SWORD AND TRANSFORMED BACK INTO *HE-MAN.*

YES, THAT IS HOW IT ENDED. BUT NOT HOW IT BEGAN.

YOU SEE, HE-MAN WASN'T THE *FIRST* TO TRY TO STOP ME...

"ORKO OF TROLLA. WOULD-BE WIZARD AND UNOFFICIAL MASCOT OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

*"HE REALIZED I HAD FOUND THE **SKULL OF POWER** EVEN BEFORE MORE POWERFUL MAGES LIKE THE **SORCERESS** DID.*

*"DESPITE FINDING HIM THOROUGHLY ANNOYING, I ALWAYS RECOGNIZED THAT ORKO HAD THE HEART OF A **HERO.***

*"TOO BAD FOR HIM THAT HIS SPELLS ALWAYS **BACKFIRED.**"*

"ORKO SOUGHT TO **DESTROY** THE SKULL OF POWER.

"HE GOT A FACE FULL OF **EVIL** FOR HIS TROUBLE.

"ORKO ABSORBED THE VERY **WORST** OF HORDE PRIME, UNLOCKING THE MENTAL BARRIERS THAT HAD ALWAYS HELD HIM BACK."

HE GAINED POWER UNDREAMED OF, BUT LOST HIS COMPASSION, HIS EMPATHY...HIS *HUMANITY.*

ALL HIS LIFE ORKO WANTED TO BE A GREAT WIZARD. NOW HE IS A *MAD GOD.* AND IT WILL TAKE *ALL* OF US TO STOP HIM.

POOR, SWEET, FUNNY LITTLE ORKO...

HE LOST HIS SOUL TRYING TO *SAVE* US.

AND WE BARELY GAVE HIM A SECOND THOUGHT WHILE WE FOUGHT HORDAK'S CONQUEST OF ETERNIA.

TROLLA

...→NFF←...
→HRNN←...!

YOU'LL BURST A BLOOD VESSEL IF YOU KEEP THAT UP.

I MEAN, AT SOME POINT YOU HAVE TO *ACCEPT* THAT THOSE SHACKLES ARE *UNBREAKABLE.*

...I...DON'T... *QUIT...*

YES, WELL, THAT ATTITUDE MAY BE HEROIC BACK ON EARTH, BUT HERE IT'S JUST PLAIN *FOOLISH.*

EVEN IF YOU WERE TO SLIP YOUR BONDS, WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE WOULD HAPPEN.

SNAP

CARE TO FIND OUT?

THAT'S IT! *FLY!* BE *FREE!*

ZOOM!!

O-HO! BUT WHERE WILL YOU FLY *TO?*

THIS IS *TROLLA,* AFTER ALL - A UNIVERSE UNTO ITSELF.

NOT FOR LONG!

HERE, MY POWER IS *ABSOLUTE.*

ALL THANKS TO MY GREATEST TREASURE - MY LITTLE *HEART OF DARKNESS.*

OH, DEAR!

DID I JUST GIVE AWAY MY ONE *WEAKNESS?*

NO.

SWAT

THE SKULL OF POWER IS *NOT* FOR SUCH AS *YOU* TO LAY YOUR FILTHY HANDS ON.

YOU MAY HAVE BEEN EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL PROTECTOR, BUT HERE YOU'RE JUST *MEAT.*

...→HRRR←...!

ARE WE QUITE CERTAIN THIS COTTAGE IS THE PLACE?

THE *HOUSE OF SECRETS* IS FAR MORE THAN IT SEEMS.

IT'S A *DIMENSIONAL NEXUS* - UNDETECTABLE BY TECHNOLOGICAL MEANS. THE *SECRET SIX* USED TO HIDE OUT HERE.

SOMEBODY'S DONE HIS HOMEWORK...

HELLO, DUNCAN.

STAND READY, COMRADES.

THOSE ARE ETERNIA'S MOST DANGEROUS VILLAINS, AND...

...AND...

...THE *QUEEN?!*

THAT *GIRL.*

IT'S *BLACK ALICE--!*

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE* TO HER?

LOWER YOUR WEAPON, MAN-AT-ARMS. FOR THIS DAY, AT LEAST, WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME SIDE.

...unnh...

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?

THE SAME THAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOU AND YOUR WORLD UNLESS WE ACT SWIFTLY.

COME *INSIDE.* IT'S EASIER JUST TO *SHOW* YOU.

THIS IS THE BIG *BATTERY* SKELETOR HAS BEEN USING TO DRAIN EARTH'S MYSTICAL ENERGIES.

IT'S THE REASON ANY OF YOU WHO USE MAGIC ARE WITHERING AWAY.

THEN LET US DESTROY IT!

SKRAK

ARHH!

DON'T WASTE YOUR EFFORT.

I TRIED TO *DEACTIVATE* IT MOMENTS AGO, BUT IT SEEMS ORKO TOOK *PRECAUTIONS* IN CASE I TRIED TO KEEP IT FOR MYSELF.

THE PRIME SYPHON NO LONGER RESPONDS TO MY COMMANDS. WE SHALL HAVE TO DESTROY THE TWELVE LESSER SYPHONS THAT *FEED* THIS ONE.

ORKO? WHAT'S *HE* GOT TO DO WITH THIS?

AND WHERE IS *PRINCE ADAM?!*

HE'S GONE TO FIGHT THE ENEMY IN HIS OWN REALM. AND TO FREE THE ONE CALLED "SUPERMAN," IF POSSIBLE.

THEN SUPERMAN IS ALIVE.

INDEED. HIS "DEATH" WAS A *DECEPTION.*

BUT THEN, YOU SEEM TO HAVE ALREADY *DEDUCED* THIS...

"IF ANYONE CAN FREE YOUR COMRADE, IT IS PRINCE ADAM.

*"I HELPED HIM **SNEAK** INTO TROLLA JUST BEFORE YOU GOT HERE, THAT HE MIGHT TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE ENEMY"*

SKELETOR, I BARELY *RECOGNIZE* YOU.

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE—

SINCE *HE-MAN* SHATTERED MY STAFF AND *DISFIGURED* ME, YES...

"YOU WILL RECALL I FELL INTO THE *ABYSS* THAT SURROUNDS CASTLE GRAYSKULL. I WAS NEARER TO DEATH THAN I CARE TO ADMIT.

"ORKO'S LINK TO THE SKULL ALLOWED HIM TO *REACH OUT* TO ME...

"...AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS IN HIS HOME DIMENSION OF *TROLLA.*

"THE MONTHS HAD *TRANSFORMED* HIM. IN TURN, HE HAD TRANSFORMED HIS WORLD AND HIS PEOPLE. "

HE...RE-MADE *ME* AS WELL. I'M STILL UNSURE IF IT WAS OUT OF PITY, OR AS A CRUEL *JEST.*

BUT HE DID INFUSE ME WITH THE MAGIC OF MY BROKEN *HAVOC STAFF,* AND THAT SHALL PROVE HIS *UNDOING...*

UM, GUYS...? I HATE TO INTERRUPT, BUT SOME *VISITORS* ARE STARTING TO SHOW UP OUTSIDE.

WHO?

OH, YOU KNOW...

"...PRETTY MUCH *EVERYBODY.*"

CRACKING SKULLS

Keith Giffen Tony Bedard Writers

Pop Mhan (pgs. 1-10, 17-20)
Eduardo Francisco (pgs. 11-16
Artists

Cover Art by Mikel Janin

THIS IS WHERE...

...THE *MASTER'S* ENEMIES...

...ARE HIDING.

HOW MANY?

DOESN'T MATTER.

THEY'LL ALL DIE.

ONCE THE *HOUSE OF SECRETS* FALLS, NO ONE CAN STOP *THE MASTER.*

SOMEONE MUST'VE SENT A HELL OF AN *E-VITE...*

IDIOT. *ORKO* SENT YOUR WORLD'S MIGHTIEST BEINGS TO *DESTROY* US!

NOW *TAKE* THEM, MY LACKEYS, AND BE NOT AFRAID!

I CANNOT GUARANTEE YOU *VICTORY*, BUT THIS MUCH I SWEAR:

SKELETOR, LORD OF ETERNIA, *REFUSES* TO DIE ON THIS TRASH HEAP YOU CALL "EARTH"!

SHRAK!

=>WHUNG<=

CHOM

THESE PEOPLE ARE *MIND-CONTROLLED!* AVOID LETHAL FORCE!

I'M NOT MAKING ANY PROMISES.

HRARRH!!

THESE ARE...JUST THE VANGUARD.

I SENSE...A MULTITUDE APPROACHING.

SWAT

*THAT'S BECAUSE ORKO SENT THE MIND-CONTROL SPELL AROUND THE GLOBE. WE MUST CUT OFF HIS **POWER SUPPLY.***

*I PLACED TWELVE MYSTIC-ENERGY **SYPHONS** ACROSS YOUR WORLD. I AM SENDING THEIR **LOCATIONS** TELEPATHICALLY.*

*NOW, GO! **DESTROY** THE SYPHONS! CRIPPLE OUR ENEMY AND SAVE YOUR WORLD!*

*AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, PRAY MY **NEPHEW'S** MISSION IS GOING BETTER THAN OURS...*

TROLLA

Probably should've planned this out a little better...

A whole *dimension* to search, and I haven't a clue where Orko's keeping *Superman* captive.

At least he hasn't detected me yet. Good thing I--

GOOD THING YOU *WHAT?*

CAME HERE IN THE GUISE OF PLAIN OLD *PRINCE ADAM?* DID YOU *REALLY* THINK THAT WOULD KEEP ME FROM SENSING YOUR *PRESENCE?*

OR DID SKELETOR NEGLECT TO MENTION THAT I'M A *GOD* HERE?!

ORKO!

IT'S NO USE RUNNING. I AM *EVERYWHERE!*

YOU CANNOT ESCAPE!

I'M NOT *TRYING* TO ESCAPE!

I *KNOW* YOU, OLD FRIEND! AND ANY TREASURE YOU CLAIM...

...YOU KEEP CLOSE TO YOUR *HEART!*

...unh?

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...!

SKOW

I HAVE THE POWER!

COME HERE.

SHNNGK

WHO *ARE* YOU?

THEY CALL ME *HE-MAN.*

I'M, AH... I'M THE GUY WHO *KILLED* YOU.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

YOU CAN *EXPLAIN* AFTER WE TAKE CARE OF *THIS* GUY.

SHOULD BE A HECK OF A STORY.

IT'S A TALE *YOU'LL* NEVER GET TO HEAR...

DESTROY THEM, MY BROTHERS!

SHOW THEM WHAT A BILLION TROLLANS CAN DO!

KINDA STARTING TO WISH YOU'D BROUGHT SOME OF MY FRIENDS!

THEY HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL BACK ON EARTH!

GREECE

CAREFUL, LUV, THIS ONE PACKS A *PUNCH.*

SO DO *I.*

EGYPT

STAY HERE. LET ME HANDLE THIS.

...N-NO. *BLACK ADAM'S...* TOO STRONG FOR YOU...

CAMBODIA

SYPHON'S NEARBY. I CAN SMELL IT.

IF YOU ARE HARMING BATTLE CAT IN ANY WAY, DEADMAN...

CHILL, *STRATOS.* I'M JUST IN HERE TEMPORARILY.

FRANCE

HOLD HIM, ROBOTO.

NO! THAT BELONGS TO THE *MASTER!*

THE HOUSE OF SECRETS

COME! DO YOUR WORST!

SKELETOR SHALL *NEVER* FALL TO RABBLE SUCH AS *YOU!*

BLACK ALICE! I KNOW EARTH'S MAGIC DRAIN HAS SERIOUSLY WEAKENED YOU, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!

...HNHH...?

SKELETOR WON'T LAST ANOTHER *MINUTE* OUT THERE.

...WHADDYA WANT *ME* TO DO ABOUT IT?

YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO TAP INTO THE POWERS OF THOSE YOU'VE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH – AND NO ONE, EXCEPT SKELETOR, HAS HAD AS MUCH EXPOSURE TO ORKO LATELY THAN YOU.

TAP INTO ORKO'S MAGIC, USE IT TO BREAK HIS MIND CONTROL SPELL!

ORKO'S MAGIC IS WAY TOO VOLATILE... I COULD DIE!

YOU'LL BE DEAD IN MINUTES IF YOU *DON'T* TRY.

OKAY, HERE GOES NOTHING...

HEH. HEY ORKO..WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

I...FEEL STRANGE...

THAT'S NOT THE MASSS--

--SSTER...?

UM...HOW DID I GET HERE?

WHY AM I WASTING TIME *HERE?!*

THANK THE FATES...!

SKRAK

SUPERMAN'S *ALIVE,* YOU SAY?

NICE TO HAVE YOU BACK, *WONDER WOMAN.*

KA-THOOM

TROLLA

HE-MAN! I'M NOT MUCH GOOD AGAINST *MAGIC!*

OKAY, I'VE GOT JUST THE THING...

THE *SWORD OF POWER* WON'T SERVE THE *UNWORTHY*--

--BUT IN *YOUR* CASE, SUPERMAN, I DOUBT THAT'S A PROBLEM.

YOU *SURE* ABOUT THIS?

JUST *DON'T* CALL UPON THE *POWER OF GRAYSKULL* AND YOU'LL BE FINE.

THE POWER OF *WHAT--?*

FWASH

UNACCEPTABLE!

SKELETOR! SEND ME *EVERYTHING* YOU'VE SYPHONED FROM THAT SAD LITTLE WORLD.

NOW!

YESSSS!

IT'S ALL I HOPED FOR! IT'S *GLORIOUS!*

IT'S--

FWOOSH

IT'S MINE!!

?!

GET YOUR CLAWS OFF ME!

LET'S GO, HE-MAN. PARTY'S OVER...

EARTH

FLASH

THE POWER IS *MINE!* I *COLLECTED* IT!

I DON'T CARE!

YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN *HURT* ME, SKELETOR?

I FOUND YOU AT DEATH'S DOOR. I *REMADE* YOU!

I *GAVE* YOU YOUR NEW POWERS—

--AND WHAT I *GIVE*, I CAN TAKE AWAY!

SWIFT

NOOOOO--!

KEEP HITTING HIM! DON'T LET UP!

I NEVER DO!

WHRAWW

IS NO ONE *LISTENING?!*

KRAK

I. AM. A. GOD!!!

FEAR NOT, ORKO! WE'LL RESTORE YOU SOMEHOW!

BUT *FIRST* YOU'RE GOING *DOWN!*

I WILL KILL YOU ALL! NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

I'LL SUCK THIS WORLD DRY AND LEAVE A SMOLDERING HUSK!

I FEAR EVEN ALL THESE REINFORCEMENTS WON'T BE *ENOUGH.*

IT'S OKAY. I THINK MY X-RAY VISION JUST FOUND ORKO'S *WEAK SPOT.*

GET READY TO *LIGHT HIM UP!*

-urk-

SHFF

WH-WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE?!*

YOUR TURN, HE-MAN...

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!

SHA-KOOM

N-NO! THIS CAN'T BE *HAPPENING*--!

IT *CAN'T!*

THE *POWER!* I MUST *HAVE* IT!

FWASH!

AND IN THE WORDS OF THE BARD...

"...EXIT STAGE LEFT."

GIVE IT TO ME! IT'S *MINE!*

SKELETOR, YOU *FOOL!* DON'T—

SNAP

"ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL." THAT'S SHAKESPEARE, TOO.

WHERE ARE THEY, CONSTANTINE?

GONE, BATMAN. *FOREVER,* IF I GOT IT RIGHT.

LET US HOPE SO. BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT SKELETOR, IT'S THAT *HE* COMES BACK.

OH, MY SON.

I KNOW, MOTHER. ME, TOO.

BUT I CAN'T JUST LEAVE ORKO LIKE THAT.

ONCE *HORDAK* IS BEATEN, I WON'T REST UNTIL ORKO'S SOUL IS PURGED OF EVIL.

SPEAKING OF HORDAK, WHAT DO WE DO NOW? I MEAN, WE DID COME HERE HOPING TO *RECRUIT* SKELETOR IN OUR WAR AGAINST THE HORDE.

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND A DIFFERENT WAY TO LIBERATE ETERNIA.

GODSPEED TO YOU ALL.

DON'T FORGET TO WRITE.

GOOD LUCK, SON. TRY TO LET ME KNOW IF YOU SUCCEED.

I PROMISE I WILL, MOM.

QUEEN MARLENA? YOU'RE NOT GOING BACK *WITH* THEM?

IF ONLY I COULD, BUT WHEN SKELETOR BANISHED ME TO EARTH, HE *CURSED* ME SO I CAN NEVER RETURN TO ETERNIA.

WE'LL FIND A WAY TO DISPEL THAT CURSE, REST ASSURED.

YOUR *FIRST* PRIORITY IS TO SAVE ETERNIA FROM HORDAK. YOU CAN WORRY ABOUT ME AFTER.

TILL THEN, TAKE THIS *LOCKET* TO REMEMBER ME BY.

Were you ever planning to tell her about your sister, Adora?

It would only be cruel to let her know she has a daughter she might *never* get to know.

But I still hold out hope that one day we'll make *all* of this right.

THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM.

ANYONE KNOW OF A DECENT *PUB* AROUND HERE?

SO. WHAT DID *YOU* THINK OF THEM?

>HH<

I THOUGHT THEY'D *NEVER* LEAVE.

WHAT DO YOU TWO SAY WE GO PATCH THAT *HOLE* WE MADE IN THE BATCAVE?

THE END

DC COMICS PRESENTS

60¢ U.K. 20p

NO. 47 JULY

SUPERMAN®

AND THE

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE†

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

AS LONG AS SKELETOR MAGICALLY CONTROLS ME, I MUST ATTACK HE-MAN... AND THAT MEANS...

...I COULD DIE!

ANDRU & GIACOIA

C-926

"FROM ETERNIA WITH DEATH!"

Paul Kupperberg Writer

Curt Swan Penciller

Mike DeCarlo Inker

Cover Art by Ross Andru & Frank Giaocoia

FROM ETERNIA –
WITH DEATH!

ROCKETED TO EARTH FROM THE DYING PLANET KRYPTON, THE BABY KAL-EL GREW TO BECOME THE MAN OF STEEL... AND NOW HE FIGHTS SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE GREATEST HEROES OF YET ANOTHER WORLD...

SUPERMAN

Created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

AND

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

GREAT KRYPTON-- THESE MAGICAL BONDS...THEY'RE DRAINING MY STRENGTH--!

THE CURSE OF THE DARK ONES BE ON YOU, SKELETOR! RELEASE THIS TRAVELER FROM BEYOND ...OR FEEL THE WRATH OF HE-MAN!

TIME, THEY SAY, IS RELATIVE -- BUT THEN, SO IS PLACE -- ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE SUPERMAN, WITH POWERS AND ABILITIES TO CARRY YOU THROUGHOUT THE COSMOS ... ACROSS THE MYRIAD DIMENSIONAL PLANES --

--EVEN IF SOMETIMES, THESE TRAVELS ARE MADE UNWILLINGLY -- WITH THE AID OF FORCES TOTALLY UNCONCERNED WITH THE DESIRES OF THOSE INVOLVED ... EVEN A SUPERMAN...

"FROM ETERNIA -- WITH DEATH!"

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THE ROYAL CITY OF THE WORLD CALLED ETERNIA...

-; SIGH!-

LET'S TRY IT *AGAIN, PRINCE ADAM*... AND PERHAPS *THIS* TIME YOU MIGHT BRING YOURSELF TO DO IT *RIGHT*--

--IF FOR NO *OTHER* REASON THAN AS A PLEASANT *CHANGE OF PACE!*

HA HA! HOW *SERIOUSLY* YOU TAKE THESE *GAMES*, MY OLD MENTOR. BUT *I* SAY, WHAT *GOOD* IS IT IF I CAN'T AT LEAST HAVE SOME *FUN*, EH?

AND *I* DON'T LIKE A LITTLE FUN NOW AND AGAIN, BOY--?

YOU, MAN-AT-ARMS...? ALL *YOU* THINK ABOUT ARE YOUR *WEAPONS* AND *WAR-TOYS!* *HA HA!*

AND ALL THAT'S ON *YOUR* MIND IS *CAROUSING*, YOUNG PRINCE. ALL OF *ETERNIA* KNOWS THIS--

--AND I'D WAGER IT MAKES EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD A *NERVOUS WRECK* THAT THE *HEIR* TO THE THRONE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A RABBLE-ROUSER!

YOU SOUND LIKE MY *PARENTS*, GOOD *MAN-AT-ARMS*. BUT IF IT WILL MAKE YOU *HAPPY*...

YOU'RE HERE TO LEARN THE WAYS OF *COMBAT*, BOY-- *NOT* TO BRING ME *JOY*... AND THE GODS *KNOW* YOU'VE NEVER DONE *THAT!*

NOW *BEGIN*--AND BY ALL THAT'S *HOLY*... TRY TO REMEMBER WHAT I'VE *TAUGHT* YOU.

AS YOU *WILL*, GOOD TEACHER.

VVVVRRRRRRRR

AYE--THAT IS THE *WAY*, PRINCE ADAM. MOVE WITH *CAUTION*-- KEEP UP YOUR *GUARD* WHILST YOU SEARCH OUT AN *OPENING* ... THEN... *EH*--?!

BY THE ROYAL CROWN... *NO*--

--NO... NOT LIKE THAT!

COME, COME, VENERATED TEACHER--*CALM* YOURSELF. AFTER ALL, I *DID* STOP THE BLASTED THING, *DIDN'T* I?

AYE--THAT YOU *DID*... LIKE AN *IGNORANT BEASTMAN!* OH, I'VE TAUGHT YOU SINCE YOU WERE A *CHILD*, PRINCE ADAM, AND FRANKLY, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS--

--I'VE SEEN ABSOLUTELY *NO CHANGE* IN YOU AT *ALL!*

AH, AND YOU, DEAR MAN-AT-ARMS, HAVE *LIKEWISE* REMAINED AS YOU WERE--AS LOVABLE AND *CRUSTY* AS *EVER!*

STILL CAUSING MY FATHER *GRIEF*, I SEE, PRINCE ADAM.

WELCOME, LOVELY *TEELA*--

--THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE ROYAL GUARD *HONORS* ME WITH HER PRESENCE.

AS USUAL, ADAM, YOUR *WIT* IS AS *DEVELOPED* AS YOUR SENSE OF *RESPONSIBILITY* ...WHICH MEANS *NOT AT ALL!*

TEMPER YOUR TONGUE, MY PRETTY. REMEMBER YOU SPEAK TO THE *PRINCE OF THE REALM!*

UH-HUH--*REMIND* ME OF THAT AGAIN WHEN I COME RUNNING TO PULL YOUR *ROYAL FAT* OUT OF THE *NEXT BRAWL* YOU GET INTO.

AHEM... AH, YES, MY LADY.

AND *SPEAKING* OF BRAWLS--! WITH ANY *LUCK*, YOU'LL *UNDOUBTEDLY* BE SEEING ME *LATER*... ER, AT THE *DRAGON'S BREATH INN*. I'LL BE THE ONE *SWINGING* FROM THE *CHANDELIER!*

RIGHT-- IN YOUR *USUAL SPOT!*

THIS IS BUT A SMALL PART OF ETERNIA--

--WHILE THIS IS AN EQUALLY SMALL PART OF A MORE FAMILIAR PLACE KNOWN AS EARTH.

BUT REMOVED AS THEY MAY BE FROM ONE ANOTHER, THERE ARE STILL SIMILARITIES...

MR. PLANET

WGBS

SIGH! MAYBE YOU WANNA TRY THAT AGAIN, CLARK--

--ONLY THIS TIME, YOU MAYBE WANNA DO IT WITHOUT FALLING FLAT ON YOUR FACE--?

SORRY, JOSH. GUESS I DIDN'T SEE THAT CABLE THERE.

HEY--NO PROBLEM! I MEAN WHY SHOULDN'T YOU TRIP OVER A CABLE THAT'S BEEN LYING IN THE SAME PLACE EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS...?

GROAN! CLARK... WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOUR SOLE PURPOSE FOR BEING PUT ON THIS EARTH IS TO AGGRAVATE MY POOR, ACHING ULCERS?

GEE, JOSH--I GUESS I'M JUST NOT USED TO THE SHOW'S NEW FORMAT YET. I NEVER HAD TO WALK TO THE ANCHOR DESK BEFORE ON CAMERA.

NEW FORMAT? WHAT NEW FORMAT? WE'RE GOING BACK TO THE OLD ONE.

I'M NOT ABOUT TO HAVE PEOPLE TUNE INTO THE GBS NEWS TO SEE IF CLARK KENT'S GONNA TRIP OVER HIS OWN FEET EVERY NIGHT! THANK GOODNESS THIS'S JUST THE REHEARSAL!

POOR JOSH. SOMETIMES I REALLY HATE DOING THESE THINGS TO HIM--

--BUT I'VE GOT AN IMAGE TO MAINTAIN AS KLUTZY-CLARK KENT--

--AND I'D HATE IT EVEN MORE IF ANYONE EVER SAW THROUGH THAT IMAGE TO THE REAL ME--

--THE ANYTHING BUT KLUTZY SUPERMAN!

TWO WORLDS, A MULTITUDE OF DIMENSIONS AND AN INFINITE AMOUNT OF TIME APART... PAY ATTENTION, THOUGH--THEY'LL SOON BE COMING TOGETHER.

ELSEWHEN:

ETERNIA IS AN ODD AMALGAMATION OF THINGS -- ON THE ONE HAND, IT POSSESSES A SCIENTIFIC TECHNOLOGY FAR ADVANCED OF EARTH. ON THE OTHER... WELL--

...SAID THE WENCH TO THE KNIGHT, "AYE, SIRE, BUT WHAT WANT YOU OF ME?" AND THE KNIGHT TO THE WENCH DID REPLY... Z

...."COME INTO MY CASTLE AND SEE!" OH, 'TWAS A LUSTY AGE, THAT I CAN'T BE DENIED...

PRRRR.! WHY DO I DO THESE THINGS TO MYSELF? RATHER WOULD I BE HOME IN MY CASTLE CORNER. ÷GROAN!÷

BE OF GOOD CHEER, FAITHFUL CRINGER! WE'RE HERE FOR FINE TIMES...THE LIFTING OF A FULL FLAGON OF ALE WITH HEARTY FELLOWS!

MAYBE FOR YOU. BUT ALL THIS SHOUTING GIVES ME A HEADACHE, PRINCE ADAM. COME--LET'S RETURN TO THE CASTLE!

LATER, GOOD CRINGER. FOR THE NONCE... HAVE SOME... HUH--?

WELL, WELL. IF IT ISN'T THE PRINCE AND HIS PET PUSSYCAT! WHAT'S THE MATTER, SIRE ADAM... YOUR KITTY AFRAID OF HIS SHADOW AGAIN?

OH NO. IGNORE HIM, ADAM. HE'S JUST LOOKING FOR TROUBLE!

THEN HE'S COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE, CAT!

NOW, GOOD SIR-- WHAT WAS THAT YOU HAD TO SAY ABOUT MY CRINGER?

HAR.! I JUST WANTED TO KNOW IF THAT WERE A TIGER...OR A RUG FOR THE FIREPLACE YOU GOT WITH YOU.!

THAT'S WHAT I *THOUGHT* YOU SAID. SHALL WE STEP *OUTSIDE*?

BY ALL *MEANS*, GOOD PRINCE--

--AFTER YOU!

BWAMPPH!

BY MY FATHER THE *KING*--*THIS* IS GOING TO BE *FINE*!

AYE, MY PRINCE. MAYHAP YOU'LL EVEN *LIVE* TO TELL THE TALE OF YOUR BATTLE WITH THE *CRUSHER*!

HE'LL LIVE, CRUSHER. THE *SAME* WON'T BE SAID OF *YOU* IF YOU TAKE ONE MORE STEP TOWARDS HIM!

BY THE GODS... WHO--?

:SIGH!: I NEEDN'T EVEN *GUESS*, FRIEND CRUSHER--

VREEEETT!

--*CORRECT*, TEELA?

WHO *ELSE*, MY PRINCE? AFTER ALL, IT *IS* MY MOST *UNPLEASANT* DUTY TO LOOK AFTER YOUR ROYAL HIDE.

AYE... BUT COULDN'T YOU *WAIT* UNTIL I'D HAD MY *FUN*--?

BAH! I'LL FIND SOMEONE WHO NEEDS *NOT* A NURSEMAID.

THERE! SEE WHAT YOU'VE *DONE*, WOMAN!

DON'T YOU "*WOMAN*" ME, ADAM! WHAT WOULD THE KING SAY IF I ALLOWED HIS *ONLY* SON TO BE MADE INTO *MINCE-PIE* IN SOME *TAVERN BRAWL*?

AT *LEAST* HE'D KNOW I WENT DOWN *FIGHTING* LIKE A *MAN*... NOT THAT I'D *LOSE*, MIND YOU!

YOU WIN?! *HA*! DID YOU SEE THE *SIZE* OF THAT...

SKREEE SKREEE!

HUH?! HUSH, TEELA--!

THE NIGHT AIR IS SPLIT BY THE PLAINTIVE CRY OF A DARK BIRD OF PREY -- AND NONE BUT PRINCE ADAM TAKE HEED...

THE FALCON! I AM NEEDED!

SCREECH

EH... SINCE YOU'VE SEEN FIT TO RUIN MY EVENING, TEELA, I SEE NO REASON IN CONTINUING IT.

TILL LATER THEN--! COME, CRINGER.!

ADAM!

BLAST THAT FOOL! HE ALWAYS DOES THIS TO ME...

"... RUSHING OFF... TO THE GODS KNOW WHERE!"

BUT THE GODS DO KNOW WHERE. INDEED, IT IS THEIR CALL WHICH SUMMONS THE SEEMINGLY FRIVOLOUS PRINCE OF THE REALM.

--A SUMMONS HE DARE NOT IGNORE!

WELCOME TO THE CAVERN OF POWER, SWEET PRINCE.

-- OR SHOULD I CALL THEE HE-MAN AND BATTLE CAT?

CALL ME WHAT YOU WILL, MIGHTY SORCERESS. BUT KNOW THAT I AM, AS EVER, AT YOUR COMMAND!

SPEAK THEN, GODDESS--WHAT NEW DANGER MENACES ETERNIA THAT NEEDS THE MIGHT OF HE-MAN?

'TIS, ALAS, AS ALWAYS, MIGHTY WARRIOR... 'TIS THE EVIL OF THE DEMONIC SKELETOR-- ENEMY ETERNAL OF THY WORLD!

SKELETOR! AND WERE NOT HE THE GREAT HE-MAN, HE WOULD GASP IN FEAR. AS IS, HE MAY BARELY REPRESS A SHUDDER. AND THEN THE GODDESS SPEAKS ON...

...WHILST, MANY MILES AWAY...

THERE IT *BE*, *BEASTMAN*... MY *GOAL*-- MY ETERNAL *FRUSTRATION*... THE *CASTLE GRAYSKULL!* HOW OFTEN HAVE ITS *HIDDEN SECRETS FOILED* MY ATTEMPTS AT *ENTRY*--

--FOR WHOEVER GAINS *POSSESSION* OF ITS SECRETS SHALL *RULE ETERNIA!*

YET ONLY HE WHO HOLDS *BOTH* HALVES OF THE *POWER SWORD* MAY PENETRATE ITS COLD, STONE WALLS! THIS I SHALL DO!

GRRR. BUT, *MASTER SKELETOR*-- DON'T YE HOLD BUT *ONE PIECE* OF THE KEY?

AYE, FOR THE *OTHER* REMAINS SECRETED ELSE-WHERE ON THIS MISERABLE WORLD. YET AM I NOT *SKELETOR*--?

--AND DOES THAT NOT PLACE ME *ABOVE* THE PUNY *LAWS* OF MAN-- *AND GOD ALIKE?* NOW *BACK* WITH YOU, *BEASTMAN*--

--FOR ON THIS DAY, CASTLE GRAYSKULL *BECOMES MINE!*

--THE RESULT IS, TO SAY THE LEAST, AWESOME. AND ALL OF ETERNIA FEELS THE VERY EARTH BENEATH ITS FEET SHUDDER WITH THE FORCE OF HELL UNLEASHED. BUT MORE--

--THE CONSEQUENCE OF THIS OTHER-WORLDLY BEING'S ACTIONS BRIDGES THE VERY DIMENSIONS...

GREAT KRYPTON! THAT STRANGE *STORM CLOUD* SEEMS TO HAVE POPPED OUT OF *NOWHERE!*

WELL, I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT I *GET* FOR THINKING THIS WOULD BE A *ROUTINE* PATROL.

SCRATCH THAT CRACK ABOUT STORM-CLOUDS! THAT THING'S NO MORE A NATURAL WEATHER-PATTERN THAN I AM!

ODD THOUGH-- MY X-RAY VISION CAN'T PENETRATE IT TO SEE WHAT'S BREWING INSIDE--

--WHICH GIVES ME THE DISTURBING FEELING THAT THERE'S SOMETHING DISTINCTLY UNEARTHLY ABOUT...

UGH!

RAO-- I-I FELT THAT!

UNNHHH... I-IT'S GOT ME... CAN'T PULL FREE! BUT ONLY KRYPTONITE CAN WEAKEN ME LIKE THIS... KRYPTONITE OR--

--MAGIC, SUPERMAN? BUT THE MAN OF STEEL HAS NO TIME TO PONDER THAT THOUGHT, FOR IN THE NEXT INSTANT, HE'S PULLED DEEP INTO THE HEART OF THE CLOUD--

--AND BEYOND THAT EVEN--

--TO A WORLD WHERE REALITY IS SURELY NOT WHAT HE HAS COME TO EXPECT!

BY THE DARK GODS! THE SKIES OPEN-- AND THE CASTLE GRAYSKULL DOES SEND ITS AGENT TO DO BATTLE WITH ME!

CHOLOH'S BEARD, MASTER-- WHAT WILL YOU DO?!

DO, MY HIDEOUS LACKEY? WHY, *BATTLE*, OF COURSE! THOUGH THE *POWER SWORD* COULD PIERCE NOT THE WALLS OF THE CASTLE--

--SURELY EVEN ITS POWER REDUCED BY *HALF* MAY *SUFFICE* TO DISPATCH MY STRANGELY GARBED FOE!

CRATERS OF WEGTHOR-- WHAT A *TRIP!* WHERE IN THE NAME OF KRYPTON *AM* I-- THIS *ISN'T* EARTH... EVEN IF FOR SOME REASON THEIR LANGUAGE IS SIMILAR TO OURS!

BETTER QUESTION STILL-- WHO'S THE *SKULL-FACED* CLOWN WITH THE *OVERGROWN POCKET-KNIFE*--

--AND WHAT MAKES HIM THINK HE CAN HURT *ME* WITH... *UHNN!*

FIRST BLOOD IS *MINE*, CAPED ONE! DO YOU *BOW* TO THE POWER OF SKELETOR OF ETERNIA...OR NEED I HAVE YOUR *HEAD* ERE YOU SHALL *SURRENDER!*

I'M AFRAID YOU DON'T GET *EITHER*, SKELETOR! I DON'T KNOW *HOW* I GOT HERE--WHERE THE DEVIL *HERE* IS--*OR* HOW YOU WERE ABLE TO *CUT* MY *INDESTRUCTIBLE* COSTUME--

-- BUT THE NAME'S *SUPERMAN*, AND I DON'T TAKE *KINDLY* TO THIS TYPE OF *GREETING!*

EH--! YOUR STRENGTH IS *PRODIGIOUS*, MAN....!

SO I'VE BEEN *TOLD*, NOW *BACK OFF*, MISTER--AND START TALKING!

UGH!

KNOPF!

MY MASTER NEED SAY *NAUGHT* TO THEE, HUMAN! NOT WHEN HIS FAITHFUL *BEASTMAN* STANDS EVER *READY* TO COME TO HIS DEFENSE!

HUH!? YOU REALLY *OUGHT* TO TRAIN YOUR *PETS* BETTER, *SKELETOR*. IF THEY'RE NOT *KINDER* TO STRANGERS--

--THEY'RE LIABLE TO GET THEIR *NOSES SLAPPED*--

--BUT GOOD!

AIIIEEE! *MASTER*-- *SAVE* YOUR LOYAL SERVANT!

DON'T COUNT ON IT, BEASTIE. SOMETHING TELLS ME THE *LAST* THING YOUR MASTER'S *CONCERNED* WITH IS *YOUR* WELL-BEING.

YOU ARE TRULY *PERCEPTIVE*, CAPED ONE! YOU ALSO BEGIN TO *ANNOY* ME. AND WHAT THE *DARK LORD* FINDS BOTHERSOME--

--THE *DARK LORD* DISPATCHES.!

UNNH.!

IT TAKES LESS THAN A MOMENT-- BUT SUPERMAN KNOWS NOW WHAT HE DEALS WITH IS INDEED *MYSTICAL* IN NATURE. UNFORTUNATELY, THAT KNOWLEDGE DOES HIM *LITTLE* GOOD--

NO, LITTLE GOOD AT ALL...

C-CAN'T STOP MYSELF... SKELETOR'S *MAGIC*... *TOO POWERFUL!* MY ONLY CONSOLATION IS THAT WHILE HIS MAGIC *CAN* HURT ME--

--MY LANDING *CAN'T!*

HOLD, BRAVE BATTLE CAT! PREPARE YOURSELF FOR *ATTACK!*

WHAAAMMMFF

NAY, HE-MAN. IT LOOKS AS IF THIS ONE HAS *NO FIGHT* LEFT IN HIM!

OOF! YOUR, ER... "*TIGER*"... IS *RIGHT*, MISTER. IN FACT, AFTER MY MEETING WITH THAT SKELETOR CHARACTER, I HOPE TO RAO *YOU'RE* ONE OF THE *FRIENDLY* INHABITANTS OF THIS PLACE!

DID YOU SAY... *SKELETOR*!?

THEN YOU *KNOW* HIM, HUH?

I DO INDEED. 'TIS *HE* THE GODDESS HAS SENT ME TO STOP, ERE HE BREACH THE WALLS OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL! I AM CALLED *HE-MAN*!

MY NAME'S *SUPERMAN*... THOUGH I DON'T HAIL FROM THESE PARTS, *SOMETHING* --*SOMEHOW* BROUGHT ME HERE FROM *EARTH*, ANOTHER PLANET IN...

AYE, I HAVE *HEARD* OF THIS *EARTH*, SUPERMAN ...AND OF *YOU* AS WELL--!

--FOR IS NOT MY MOTHER, THE *QUEEN*, A *LOST TRAVELER* FROM THAT VERY WORLD? BUT THE IDENTITY OF PRINCE ADAM MUST BE PROTECTED ...EVEN FROM THIS ALIEN BEING!

BUT WE MUST WASTE NO MORE TIME! *SKELETOR MUST* BE ATTENDED TO WITH *HASTE*! AWAY, *BATTLE CAT*!

WISH I KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE--!

BUT HE GOES NONETHELESS.

AND, WITHIN MOMENTS...

THAT *CAT* OF YOURS MOVES PRETTY *FAST*, HE-MAN.

AND I MAY GO FASTER *STILL*, STRANGER-- ALMOST AS FAST AS *LIGHT ITSELF*!

OH-OH! THEN YOU'D BETTER GET READY TO *GO*-- IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GETTING SOME *UNEXPECTED COMPANY*!

NAY, SUPERMAN... THIS IS COMPANY BOTH *EXPECTED* AND HEARTILY *WELCOMED!* GREETINGS, MAN-AT-ARMS!

HAIL, GOOD WARRIOR! WHO IS THIS THAT FLIES WITH YOU INTO BATTLE?

AND AS INTRODUCTIONS ARE MADE ALL AROUND--

--ALL IS NOT WELL AT THE CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

BY *ALL THAT IS UNHOLY!* HOW CAN THIS *BE*--? HOW MAY A SIMPLE WALL OF *STONE AND MASONRY DEFY* THE MIGHT OF ONE WHO HAS CONQUERED *UNIVERSES!*

I MUST SCALE THESE WALLS-- I *SHALL!*

MANY HAVE *TRIED* THROUGHOUT THE AGES, SKELETOR--

--BUT ONLY HE WHO IS THE *TRUE* KING OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL MAY FIND ENTRY! *YOU* ARE NOT THAT ONE.!

SO... THE CAPED ONE HAS *RETURNED*-- WITH *ALLIES*, EH? HOW VERY *AMUSING!*

I AM *PLEASED* WE BRING YOU SUCH *JOY*, EVIL ONE -- THOUGH I'LL *WAGER* YOU'LL NOT MEET *THIS* WITH *LAUGHTER!*

OH, BUT I SHALL, MAN-AT-ARMS--

--I SHALL! HA HA HA HA!

I'LL GRANT YOU YOUR *RESOURCEFULNESS*, SKELETOR--BUT BY *NOW* YOU KNOW I AM ALL BUT *IMPERVIOUS* TO YOUR MAGICS!

THAT YOU *ARE*, HE-MAN! BUT YOUR CAPED FRIEND ...AH, HE IS A *DIFFERENT* MATTER, IS HE NOT? WHEN WE FIRST MET, I NOTED *HE*--

--IS ALL TOO SUSCEPTIBLE TO SORCERY! HA HA HA!

SUPERMAN! GUARD YOURSELF!

BUT THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE--

--AND NEXT THING HE KNOWS, SUPERMAN HAS FALLEN PREY TO A POWER BEYOND ANY HE HAS EVER ENCOUNTERED --

--AND HIS WILL IS NO LONGER HIS OWN.

I SENSE A GREAT *POWER* IN THIS STRANGER, WARRIOR. POWER, MAYHAP, TO RIVAL YOUR OWN. BUT THAT IS A MATTER TO BE DECIDED IN *COMBAT!* HA HA HA HA!

OH, AND IT SHALL BE *QUITE* THE BATTLE INDEED!

BWAM!

IT IS, FOR IT IS A CONTEST BETWEEN THE *STRONGEST* MEN OF TWO DIMENSIONS--

--ONE, THE ORPHANED SON OF THE PLANET KRYPTON.., A BEING SO STRONG THAT TO MOVE WORLDS IS AS NOTHING TO HIM...

THE OTHER, THE PRODUCT OF THE UNION BETWEEN THE ETERNIA KING AND AN EARTH WOMAN LOST IN TIME AND SPACE -- THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN A UNIVERSE PEOPLED BY A MYRIAD OF MIGHTY BEINGS...

AND WHEN *THESE HEROES* CLASH --

FWAMP!

-- IT IS AWESOME INDEED!

THOOM

YES, MY CHAMPION! YOU ARE MOST MIGHTY! NEVER HAVE I WITNESSED ONE WHO MAY BEST HE-MAN IN MORTAL COMBAT!

PERHAPS... PERHAPS IF YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO DO THAT--

--YOU POSSESS THE MIGHT NEEDED TO SMASH YOUR WAY INTO CASTLE GRAYSKULL SO THAT I MAY AT LAST MAKE IT MINE OWN!

GO, CAPED ONE-- DO YOUR MASTER'S BIDDING!

I--I CAN'T *HELP* BUT...TO *OBEY* THAT *FIEND!* HIS M-MAGIC MAKES IT *I-IMPOSSIBLE* TO DO ANYTHING *ELSE!*

D-DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HE-MAN--DON'T *WANT* TO *OPEN* THE CASTLE *EITHER*--

--B-BUT *HOW* DO I *S-STOP MYSELF?*

UNLESS...!

UNLESS I CAN *DISTRACT* SKELETOR LONG ENOUGH TO LOOSE HIS *CONCENTRATION* EVEN FOR A *NANO-SECOND!*

IF I *CAN'T,* I DON'T KNOW *WHAT'LL* BE *RELEASED* ON ETERNIA...!

ONWARD, CAPED ONE--CLEAR THE WAY SO *I* MAY COMMAND THE *AWESOME POWERS* OF THE *CASTLE GRAYSKULL* AND *RULE* THIS MISERABLE... *HUH?!* THE *GROUND*--

--*IT GROWS MOLTEN BENEATH MY FEET!*

YOU *BET* IT DOES, SKULL-FACE--

--AND IT'S GOING TO DO A LOT *MORE* AS WELL--

BY THE DARK ONES!

--SUCH AS *HARDEN* INTO A *SUPER-TOUGH PRISON* TO HOLD YOU--

--WHILE *I* GET *FREE* OF YOUR *MAGICAL HOLD!*

FRANKLY, SKELETOR, YOU *IMPRESS* ME LESS AND LESS AS WE GO ALONG.

MOCK ME IF YOU WILL, CAPED ONE--YOU ARE *STILL* SUSCEPTIBLE TO A *NEW SPELL!*

MAYBE *SO,* SKELETOR--BUT I HAVE TO LET YOU *CAST IT* FIRST!

GOOD TO HAVE YOU *BACK* WITH US, FRIEND *SUPERMAN!*

GOOD TO *BE* BACK, HE-MAN. NOW, IF YOU'LL ALLOW *ME*--?

BY ALL MEANS, SIR!

MAY THE *DARK ONES* DAMN YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY, FOOLS! YOU MAY HAVE BESTED ME FOR THE NONCE--

--BUT I SHALL RECOUP MY STRENGTH... AND I SHALL *RETURN* AGAIN...*THIS* TIME TO MAKE CASTLE GRAYSKULL MINE FOR ALL TIME!

H-HE'S... *GONE*...?

DOES HE DO THAT VERY *OFTEN*?

AYE, SUPERMAN. SKELETOR HAS A *WAY* OF POPPING UP TO *PLAGUE* THE PEOPLE OF ETERNIA EVERY NOW AND AGAIN--

--BUT THANKS TO YOUR TIMELY ASSISTANCE, *THIS* ATTEMPT AT DOMINATION CAME TO *NAUGHT*!

THAT'S MY *JOB*, FRIEND.

BUT I'VE GOT TO *ADMIT*--I *STILL* DON'T *UNDER-STAND* A LOT OF WHAT JUST WENT ON!

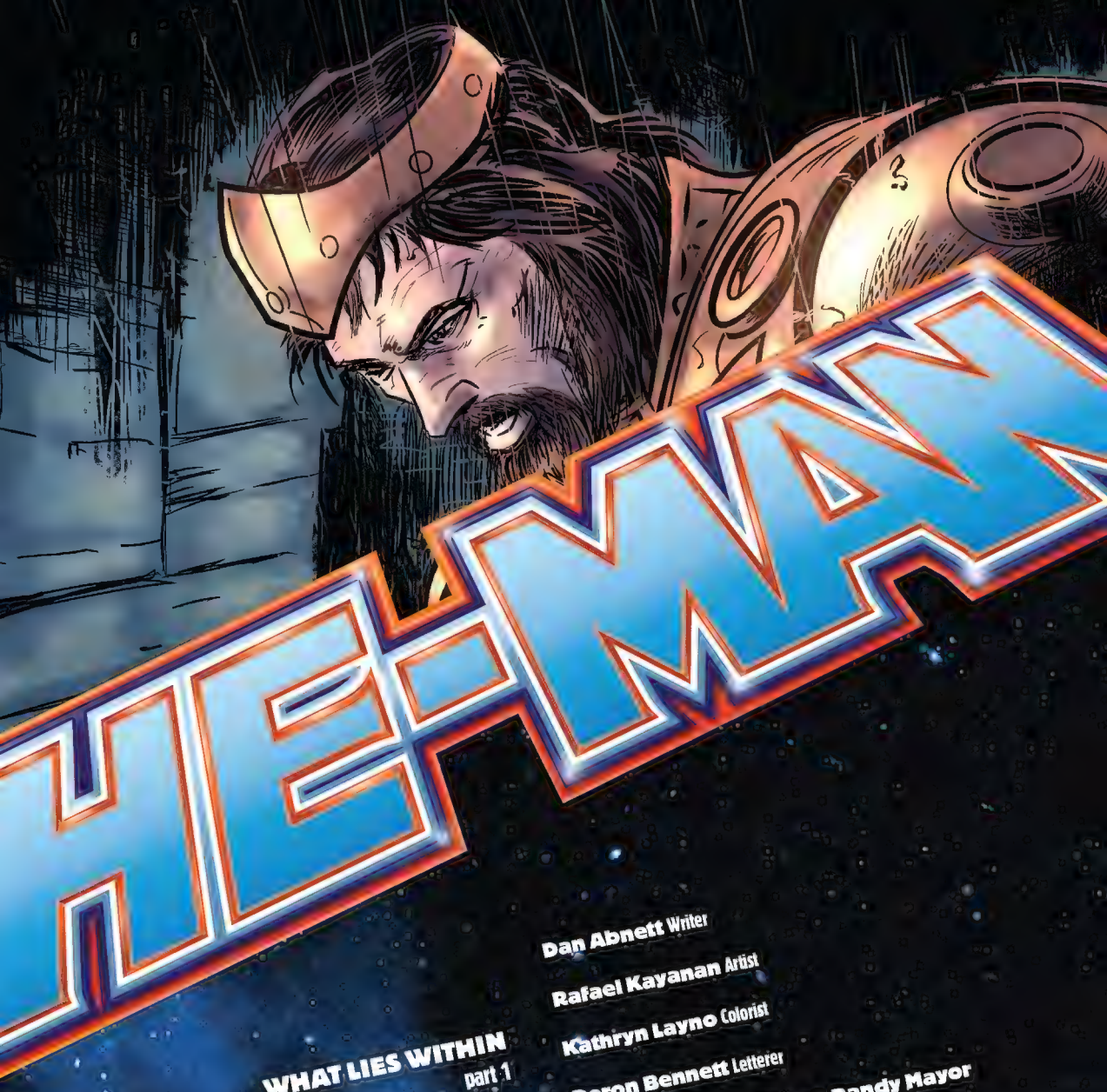
IT *CAN* BE *EXPLAINED* IF THAT IS YOUR *WISH*.

HMMM-- MAYBE *NOT*. WITH MY *SUPER-VISION* I'VE JUST SPOTTED A *TIME-SPACE WARP* OPENING UP OVER ETERNIA THAT'LL TAKE ME BACK TO EARTH... *IF* I HURRY.

BUT IF YOU EVER *NEED* ME AGAIN, HE-MAN ... *MAYBE* YOU'LL FIND A WAY TO CALL ON ME AND...

FEAR *NOT*, FRIEND SUPERMAN. SHOULD YOU BE *REQUIRED*, I *KNOW* HOW I MAY CALL UPON YOU. TILL THEN... *FAREWELL*!

THE END



WHAT LIES WITHIN
part 1

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SO SPAKE KING RANDOR--
MY FELLOWS, MY BROTHERS, MY WARRIORS.
THE ENEMY HOLDS OUR WORLD. GRAYSKULL IS TAKEN FROM US. ALL IS TAKEN FROM US.
TAKEN, BUT NOT LOST.
ON THIS BLEAK MORNING, WE WILL STRIKE BACK. WE WILL TAKE THEM AT SARNSCEPTER AND WE WILL STRIKE A BLOW THAT WILL ECHO ACROSS ETERNIA.
REDOUBLE YOUR COURAGE, DRAW YOUR BLADES, AND RIDE WITH ME.
LET YOUR SONS, AND THE SONS OF YOUR SONS, SAY OF YOU--
"HE WAS THERE, THAT DAY, WITH RANDOR. HE RODE AT SARNSCEPTER. THROUGH HIS METTLE, RANDOR LIVED..."
"...AND RANDOR WON."

THE BATTLE OF SARNSCEPTER BEGAN AT DAWN.

YOU MUST KNOW SARNSCEPTER. THAT BEAUTIFUL MARKET TOWN ON THE PLAINS OF PERPETUA?

WELL, IT WAS UNTIL THE HORDE DESCENDED UPON IT.

THERE'S SOMETHING AT SARNSCEPTER THAT THE HORDE **WANTS**, SOMETHING **BURIED** IN THE GROUND, SOMETHING THEY ARE USING VAST **EXCAVATORS** TO UNCOVER.

RANDOR DOESN'T KNOW **WHAT** IT IS. HE SIMPLY UNDERSTANDS THAT IT IS **IMPORTANT**. SO IT MUST BE **DENIED**.

CAVALRY FILES TO THE LEFT FLANK! BREAK THE LINE!

BREAK THEIR LINE!

THE HORDE MUST BE DENIED.

THE SPRING RAINS COME AT FIRST LIGHT. RANDOR USES THEM TO **MASK** HIS FIRST ASSAULT.

WITH THE SKILL ONLY A **TRUE WARRIOR AND KING** CAN WIELD, HE CUTS HIS ENEMY IN HALF.

MY LORD GRIZZLOR, ABUNDANT, WHO IS ALSO STYLED GUR'RULL GU'RROOOOW ARRRK OF--
ENOUGH! THIS IS NOT A COURT, THIS IS A BATTLEFIELD. SPEAK PLAINLY!
TELL ME THE SITUATION. TELL ME THE ENEMY DISPOSITION. WHO LEADS THEM?
RANDOR HIMSELF, MY LORD.
AND HE HAS CUT ME THIS BADLY ALREADY? THROUGH THE PICKET LINE AND THE WESTERN BASTION? SO HE IS AS BRILLIANT AS THEY SAY.
BESTING HIM AND KILLING HIM WILL BE A PRIVILEGE. MOBILIZE THE MONSTROIDS! DEPLOY THEM HERE, HERE AND HERE.
WE'LL PARRY RANDOR'S FRONTAL ATTACK, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY DEPRIVE HIM OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO FALL BACK.
THAT'S... TACTICALLY BRILLIANT, MY LORD!
I KNOW.

"MONSTROIDS APPROACH!"
THEY'RE HITTING US HARD, MY KING!
BECAUSE THEY AIM TO DENY US, AND THEN TO BOX US. WHICH IS WHY I KEPT THE FIFTH DIVISION IN RESERVE.
DEPLOY THE FIFTH!

"AS ORDERED, THEY ARE SO DEPLOYED, MY KING."

HE ANTICIPATED! HE COUNTERED YOU, MY LORD!
HE'S DAMN CLEVER. THIS WOULD BE GOOD SPORT, IF IT WASN'T SERIOUS.
NOTHING MUST BE ALLOWED TO DELAY THE EXCAVATION OF THE ARTIFACT BURIED HERE.
YOU COULD PRIME AND FIRE THE ORBITAL DISRUPTOR, MY LORD.
NO! TOO CLUMSY! TOO TOTAL! I WANT TO BEST RANDOR BY SKILLED WARFARE!
BRING IN THE MONSTROID REINFORCEMENTS FROM THE NORTH ROAD.
THAT IS A DEFENSIVE POSITION, MY LORD...
BUT CURRENTLY REDUNDANT.
RANDOR'S LINE IS NOT SO BROAD THAT HE THREATENS US THERE, BUT WE COULD MAKE GOOD USE OF THE FIREPOWER HERE.
MORE ENEMY ARMOR APPROACHES, MY KING!
THEN MORE ENEMY ARMOR WILL BUCKLE AND BURN!

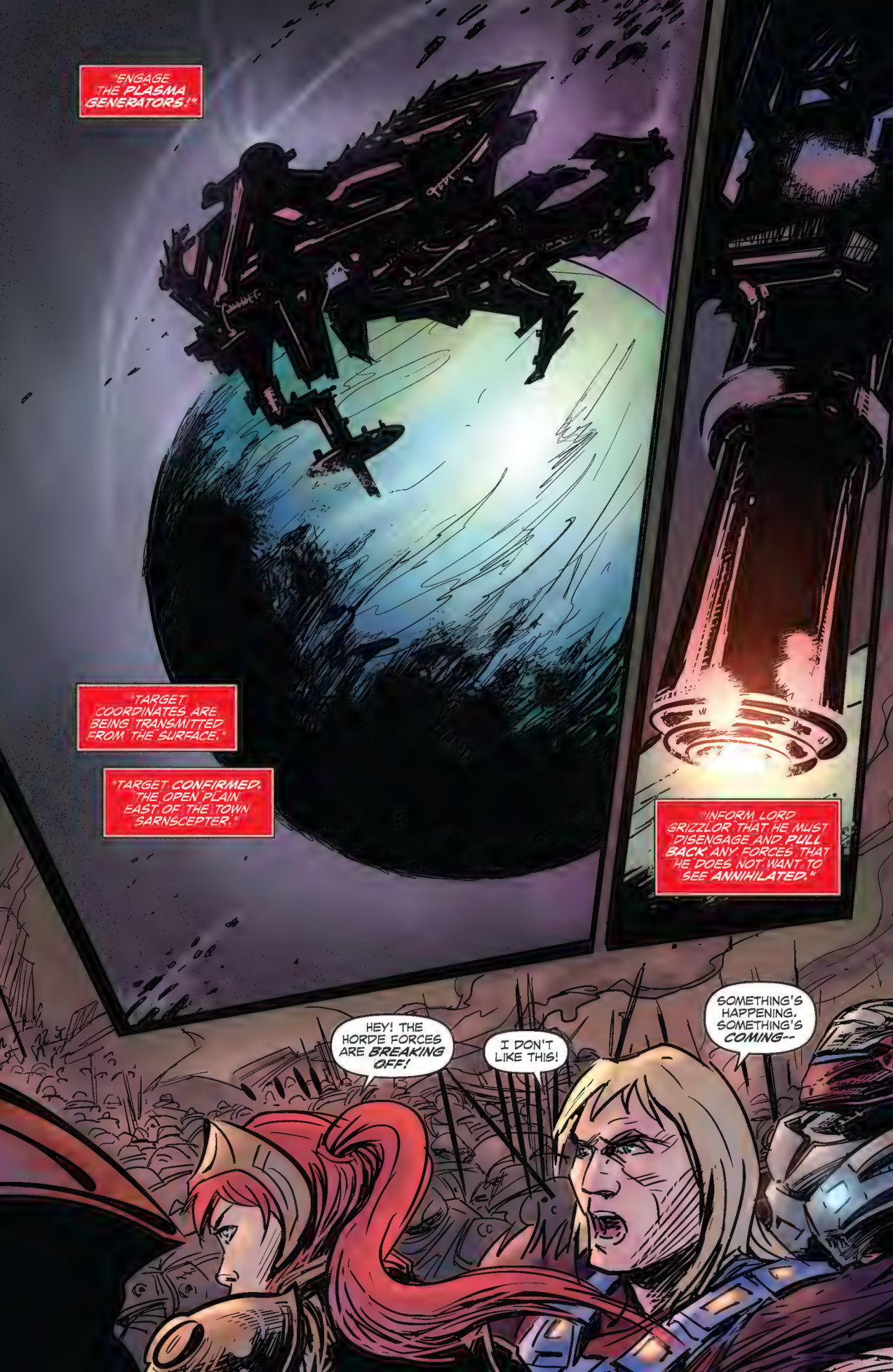
RANDOR'S VOICE IS STRONG, BUT HIS CONFIDENCE IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS MEN.
HE KNOWS HOW TOUGH THE HORDE FORCES ARE. HE KNOWS HE URGENTLY NEEDS SOMETHING THAT WILL TURN THE FORTUNES OF THIS BATTLE AROUND.
AND SOMETIMES, WHEN THE HIGH KING OF ETERNIA MAKES A WISH...
WHAT IS THAT LIGHT, MY KING?

"HE-MAN! IT IS HE-MAN!"

GODS OF ETERNIA! WE APPEAR TO HAVE RETURNED IN THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE AGAINST THE HORDE! WHAT CIRCUMSTANCE HAS LED TO THIS--
IT IS A BATTLE AGAINST THE HORDE, MY FRIEND.
WHAT DETAILS DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

ADAM! LEAVE SOME FOR *US!*
FOR ETERNIA!
FOR ETERNIA *INDEED!*
OUR *GREATEST WARRIORS* HAVE RETURNED! THIS TIDE WILL TURN *NOW!*

HE-MAN, AND POWERFUL ALLIES, TRANSPORTED DIRECTLY INTO THE HEART OF THE FIGHT!
TO ARMS! ALL OF YOU!
THIS GAME BECOMES STILL MORE OF A CHALLENGE. I--
IT IS NO GAME...
MY LORD HORDAK!
HE-MAN HAS RETURNED TO ETERNIA.
EVEN HERE, IN THE DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS, I FELT THE MYSTICAL TREMOR OF HIS APPEARANCE. HE CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO THWART OUR SCHEMES, GRIZZLOR.
HAVE FAITH IN MY SKILLS, DARK LORD. MY FORCES WILL SOON--
TAKE NO CHANCES, GRIZZLOR. USE THE ORBITAL DISRUPTER.
IT IS A CRUDE, UNSUBTLE WEAPON, AND I WOULD RATHER PROVE MYSELF HERE ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.
AND I WOULD RATHER BE SERVED BY LOYAL RETAINERS WHO DO NOT GAMBLE WITH THE OUTCOME OF MY PLANS. USE THE ORBITAL DISRUPTOR.
YES, MY LORD HORDAK.


"ENGAGE THE PLASMA GENERATORS!"
"TARGET COORDINATES ARE BEING TRANSMITTED FROM THE SURFACE."
"TARGET CONFIRMED. THE OPEN PLAIN EAST OF THE TOWN SARNSCEPTER."
"INFORM LORD GRIZZLOR THAT HE MUST DISENGAGE AND PULL BACK ANY FORCES THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO SEE ANNIHILATED."
HEY! THE HORDE FORCES ARE BREAKING OFF!
I DON'T LIKE THIS!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING. SOMETHING'S COMING--

sSHRRAAAAK
WHIRRRRRR

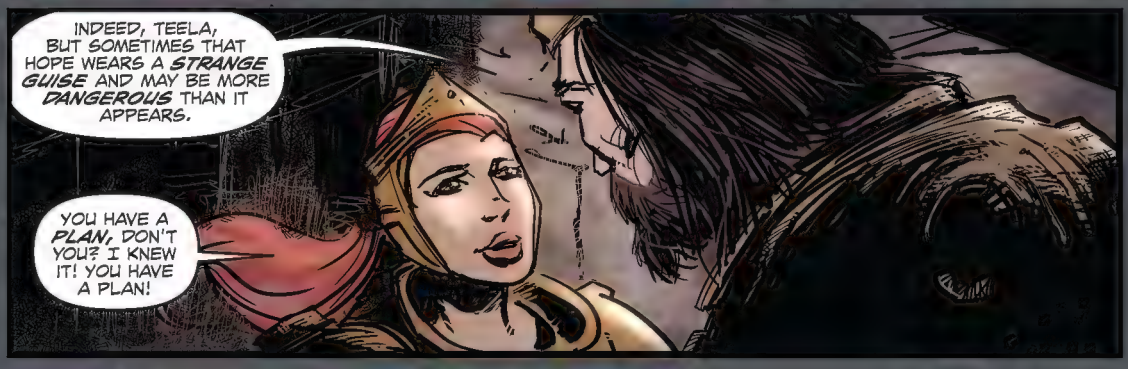
ADAM.
ADAM OF ETERNIA.
NHHHH...
THE HORDE HAS GREAT STRENGTH, ADAM. YOU WERE LUCKY TO SURVIVE TODAY.
EVEN WITH YOUR NEW POWER, YOU CANNOT WIN THIS FIGHT DIRECTLY.
W-WHO ARE YOU?
NHGGHH... I MUST BE HURT, CONCUSSED...
I AM NO HALLUCINATION, ADAM. ONCE I BORE THE NAME ZODAC.
BUT I CAN SEE THE SHAPES OF THE PAST AND FUTURE, AND THUS I CAN ADVISE.
NOW I AM A MERE OBSERVER OF DESTINY, UNABLE TO INFLUENCE THINGS IN PERSON.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
SOON, YOU WILL BE OFFERED A NEW CHALLENGE, AN INDIRECT MEANS OF COMBATTING THE OCCUPATION OF YOUR WORLD.

TAKE IT, BUT BE CAREFUL. YOU WILL BE TESTED, ADAM. WITHOUT A DOUBT, YOU WILL BE CHANGED FOREVER.
YOU MUST SEEK OUT WHAT LIES WITHIN...
WAIT! COME BACK! WHAT DO THOSE RIDDLES EVEN MEAN?
ADAM!
STRATOS?
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALIVE! THAT HORDE WEAPON TURNED THE WHOLE COUNTRYSIDE INTO A WASTELAND!
I HAVE BEEN AIRBORNE FOR HOURS, SEARCHING FOR SURVIVORS.
HOURS? HAVE I BEEN UNCONSCIOUS THAT LONG?
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN A PHANTOM.
A VISION, PERHAPS...
YOU SAID SURVIVORS. WHO ELSE ENDURED THE BOMBARDMENT?

FATHER! AND TEELA!
IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU BOTH!
I WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME WITHOUT A HEAVY HEART, MY SON. TEELA HAS BEEN TELLING ME OF YOUR ADVENTURES ON THAT STRANGE OTHER WORLD.
YOU RETURN TO MY SIDE ON THE DARKEST DAY ETERNIA HAS KNOWN.
WE WILL RALLY AND REGROUP. IF WE HAVE SURVIVED, THEN OTHERS WILL HAVE MADE IT TOO...
YES, BUT SCATTERED TO THE FOUR WINDS. THE LANDSCAPE IS A MANGLED WRECK FOR LEAGUES IN ALL DIRECTIONS.
GRIZZLOR WAS TAKING NO CHANCES.
SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT WEAPON WAS THE HANDIWORK OF GRIZZLOR'S LORD AND MASTER. HORDAK WANTED YOU STOPPED.
NIGHT'S FALLING. LET'S SHELTER HERE. IN THE MORNING LIGHT, WE'LL SEARCH FOR OTHERS.

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO DOWNCAST.
AGREED. IT'S AS THOUGH, WHILE WE WERE AWAY, HIS SPIRIT BROKE.
ETERNIA IS LOST. I HAVE TRIED TO BE STRONG AND SEE PAST THAT FACT, BUT I CANNOT DENY IT. ETERNIA IS LOST.
FATHER--
ADAM, BEHOLD WHAT THE HORDE HAS WROUGHT ON THE LIGHT HEMISPHERE OF OUR ONCE-MAGNIFICENT REALM.
THE PLANET IS UNDER ENEMY CONTROL. ETERNOS IS SACKED.
GRAYSKULL CAPTURED. MY ALLIES AND SUBJECTS SCATTERED, LOST OR DEAD.

I HAVE FAILED. AS A KING, I HAVE FAILED.
I HAVE FAILED MY PEOPLE.
SIRE!
MY LORD, I WILL NOT HEAR YOU TALK LIKE THIS!
THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE.

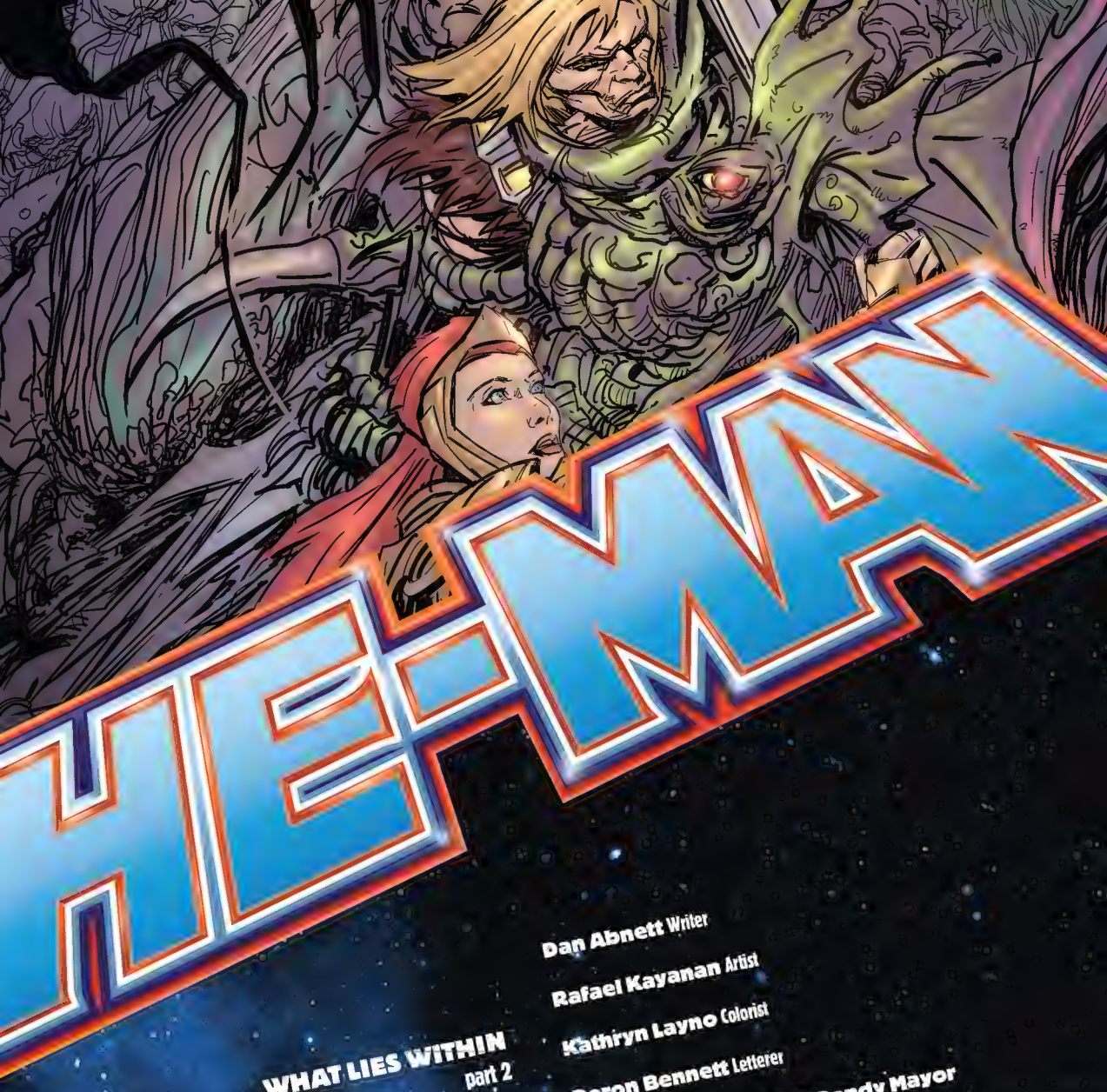

INDEED, TEELA, BUT SOMETIMES THAT HOPE WEARS A STRANGE GUISE AND MAY BE MORE DANGEROUS THAN IT APPEARS.
YOU HAVE A PLAN, DON'T YOU? I KNEW IT! YOU HAVE A PLAN!

AND IT IS ONE I MUST UNDERTAKE ALONE, FOR I COULD ASK NO ONE ELSE WOULD BE SO RECKLESS.
I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF THAT.
YEAH, HE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO DO 'RECKLESS.'

NOT, I'LL WAGER, AS RECKLESS AS THIS. I BELIEVE OUR MOST SINGULAR LOSS WAS THE SORCERESS.
SHE WAS ETERNIA'S MOST POWERFUL MAGE, AND HER DEATH LEFT US CRIPPLED AND ALLOWED THIS DISASTER TO OVERWHELM US.

I THINK OUR ONE REMAINING HOPE IS TO DO SOMETHING UNTHINKABLE AND FORBIDDEN.
WE MUST REPAIR ETERNIA'S WOUND.
WE MUST DEFY EVEN THE MYSTICAL LAWS OF CREATION.
WE MUST BRING THE SORCERESS BACK.
WE.... WHAT?

JOE BENNETT



HE-MAN

WHAT LIES WITHIN
part 2

Dan Abnett Writer

Rafael Kayanan Artist

Kathryn Layno Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Joe Bennett & Randy Mayor

ON A BITTER JOURNEY INTO THE HOPELESS NIGHT, ON A DESPERATE QUEST, IN THE DARKEST HOUR...
...SO CRIED KING RANDOR--
HAVE A CARE! TAKE ARMS!
"TAKE ARMS!"
GRRWWLLL
HORDE OUTRIDERS!
AS THE KING COMMANDS!
"HOLD THE LINE, FRIENDS...

... THEY WILL NOT TAKE US!

NO ONE DOUBTED ADAM'S WORDS. NO ONE DOUBTED HIS METTLE IN COMBAT, NOR HIS DETERMINATION TO VANQUISH THE HORDE.

HORDAK'S VILE ARMIES HAD CONQUERED ETERNIA, AND THE FORCES OF LIGHT WERE BROKEN AND SCATTERED.

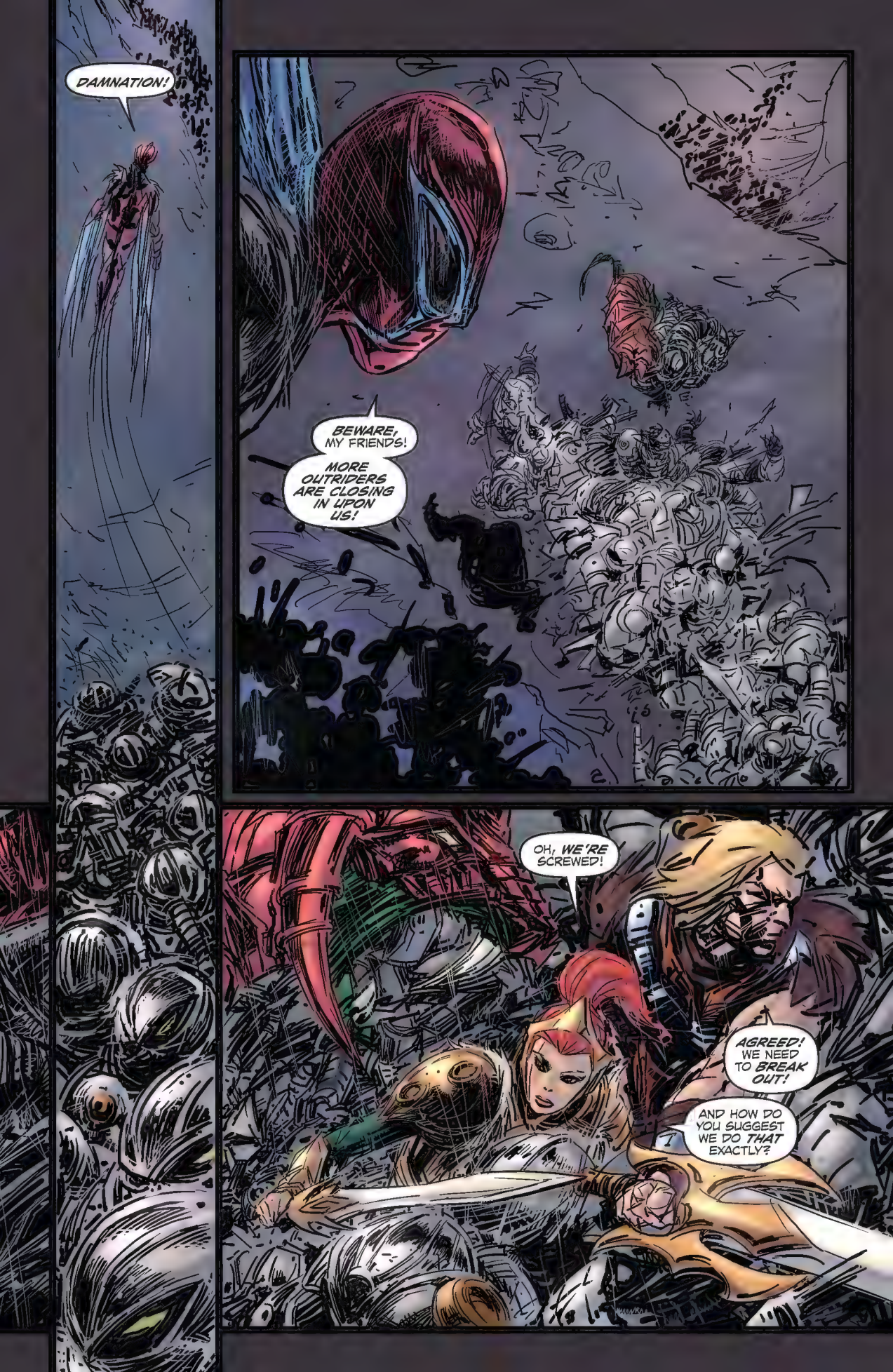
NO, NO ONE DOUBTED ADAM'S INTENT TO FREE ETERNIA.

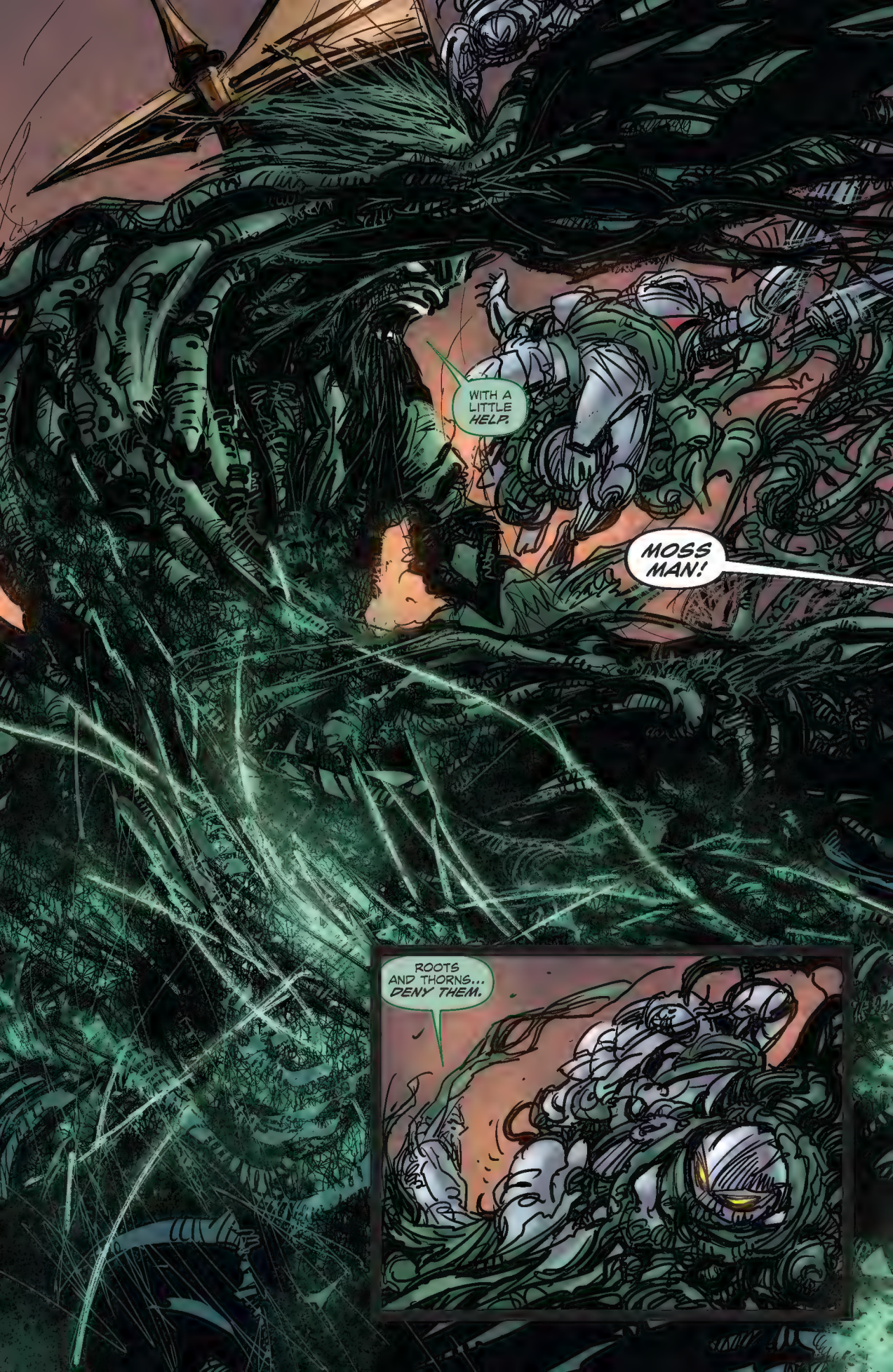
BUT THIS WAS A BAD PLACE. THE HORDE PATROL HAD FOUND THEM IN THE OPEN, THREE LEAGUES FROM MOUNT ZOAR.

THERE WERE ONLY FIVE OF THEM -- ADAM, THE KING, TEELA, STRATOS AND THE LOYAL BATTLE-CAT -- THE LAST SURVIVORS OF THE TERRIBLE BATTLE AT SARNSCEPTOR.

THEY WERE WOEFULLY OUTNUMBERED... BUT EVEN THAT WAS NOT THE WORST OF IT.

THE WORST OF IT WAS THE REASON THEY WERE TREKKING TO MOUNT ZOAR.
TEELA! TO YOUR LEFT!
SEEN HIM!
ZAT! ZAT! ZAT!
THE KING HAD ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO SAVE ETERNIA. BUT IT WAS A SCHEME SO DESPERATE IT THREATENED TO CONFOUND THE LAWS OF THE COSMOS.
ADAM AND TEELA HAD NEVER SEEN THE KING SO DEMORALIZED.
THEY FEARED THAT, IN THIS EXTREMITY, HE WAS CONTEMPLATING THE UNTHINKABLE.


DAMNATION!
BEWARE, MY FRIENDS!
MORE OUTRIDERS ARE CLOSING IN UPON US!
OH, WE'RE SCREWED!
AGREED! WE NEED TO BREAK OUT!
AND HOW DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO THAT EXACTLY?


WITH A LITTLE HELP.
MOSS MAN!
ROOTS AND THORNS... DENY THEM.

ARGHH! THE LIVING TREES TURN AGAINST US!
THE THORNS! AIIEE!
BREAK NOW, FRIENDS. I HAVE WROUGHT WALLS OF BRAMBLE, ROOT AND VINE THAT WILL HOLD OUR FOE BACK AND SLOW THEM DOWN!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALIVE, OLD FRIEND!
AS IT IS YOU. COME!

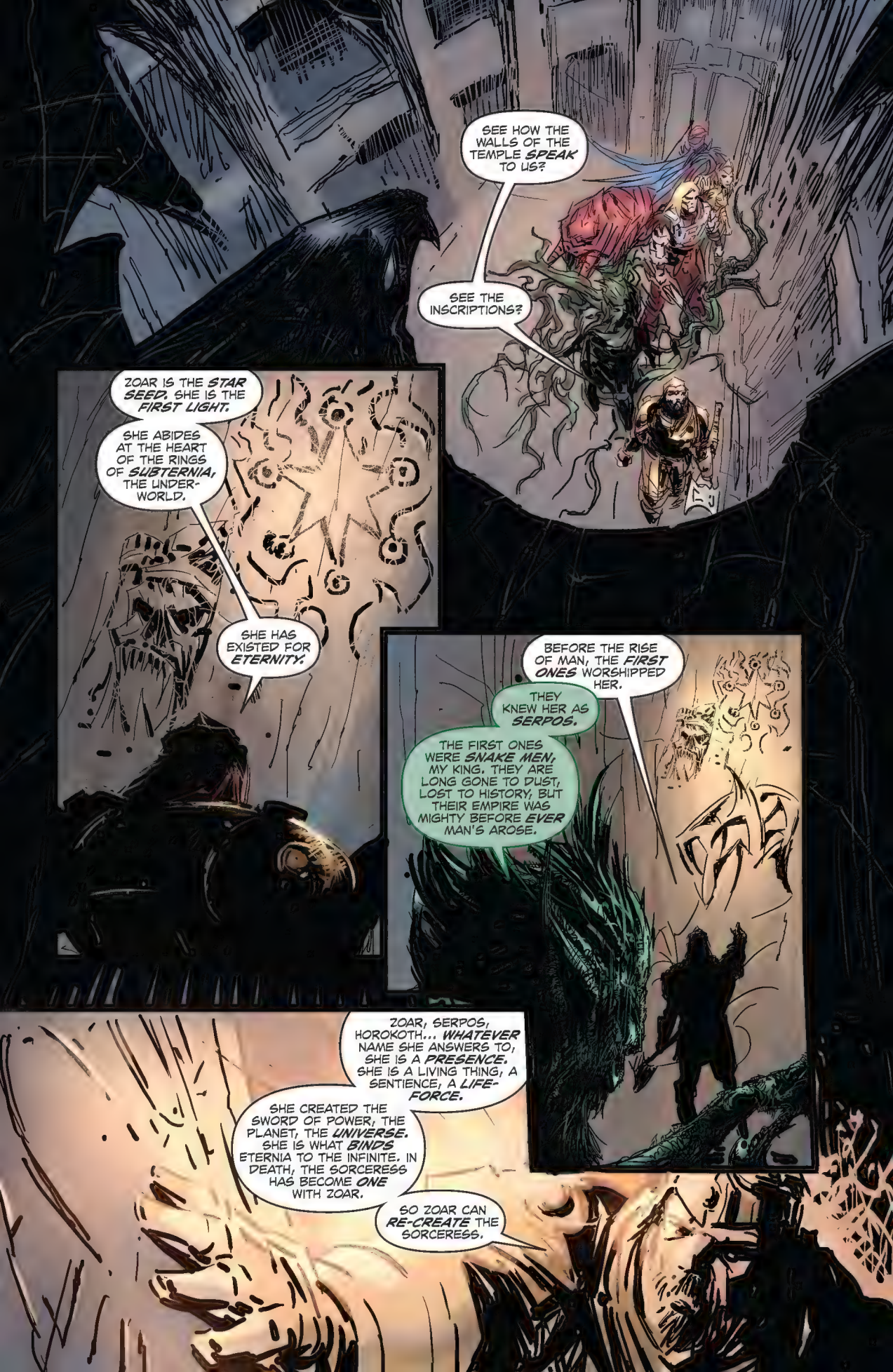
WE CAN REST HERE, LORD KING.
BUT THE OUTRIDERS BAY AT OUR HEELS.
NO, THE FOREST WILL CONCEAL US.
I HAVE ASKED THE ANCIENT TREES TO KEEP US AS THEIR SECRET, AND THEY HAVE AGREED.
WHILE WE STAY IN THESE GLADES, WE WILL NOT BE SEEN, FOR AN HOUR OR TWO AT LEAST.
DID ANY OTHERS OF US SURVIVE THE DIRE FIGHT AT SARNSCEPTOR?
NONE THAT WE HAVE SEEN.

THIS IS BLEAK.
SO, DID THE OUTRIDER PATROLS DRIVE YOU THIS FAR FROM THE PLAINS?
NO, WE WERE HEADING FOR MOUNT ZOAR.
WHAT? ARE WE NOT GOING TO TELL THE GREAT WOOD-LORD KREANN'OT N'NOROSH WHAT WE'RE DOING?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, KING RANDOR?
MOUNT ZOAR IS SACRED GROUND.
UTTERLY SACRED. I KNOW.
BUT I WENT THERE ONCE AS A CHILD... ON THE DAY BEFORE MY ASCENSION TO THE THRONE... TO LEARN SOME OF THE MYSTERIES OF ETERNIA.
YOU KNOW ZOAR AS THE NAME OF THE SORCERESS IN HER FALCON FORM, BUT THE SORCERESS IS BUT AN ORACLE OF ZOAR.
ZOAR IS THE MOTHER GODDESS OF ETERNIA. SHE IS THE SOURCE AND THE SPRING, THE HEART OF CREATION--
GREAT ZOAR HAS BEEN CALLED MANY THINGS. THE SEED OF STARS--
THE STAR SEED! EXACTLY! THE LIFE-FORCE! HERS WAS THE FIRE IN WHICH OUR UNIVERSE WAS FORGED!

SHE HAS OLDER NAMES. LIZARD NAMES THAT WERE GIVEN TO HER BEFORE EVER MAMMALS ARISE.
YOU WOULD KNOW. KREANN'OT N'NOROSH, YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST ANCIENT OF ALL THE MASTERS.
YOU KNOW HER POWER.
I ASK AGAIN. WHAT IS YOUR INTENT? WHY DO YOU MAKE THIS PILGRIMAGE?
I INTEND TO PETITION THE GODDESS, OLD FRIEND.
I HAVE BEEN TO HER FIRES, FATHER. IN THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL, IN THE CASTLE'S DEPTHS--
CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS NOW UNDER HORDAK'S CONTROL. BUT THERE IS ANOTHER PATH TO HER ETERNAL FIRES, MY SON.
A WINDING PATH, THAT LEADS TO THE BEGINNING OF TIME AND THE FACE OF ZOAR HERSELF...
IT IS FORBIDDEN TO WALK THAT PATH, MY LORD.
I WILL ASK HER TO HEAL ETERNIA'S WOUNDS. I WILL ASK HER TO RESTORE HER MOST POWERFUL ORACLE.
I WILL ASK HER TO BRING THE SORCERESS BACK TO US.

MADNESS. MADNESS.
RANDOR, MY LORD. TRUST ME, FOR I HAVE MORE OF THE ANCIENT LORE IN ME THAN YOU.
DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS. YOU RISK... YOU RISK ...UNDOING THE FUNDAMENTAL BONDS OF THE UNIVERSE.
UH, THAT'S KINDA HOW WE FELT ABOUT IT TOO.
I CONFESS--
I WAS ALARMED.
I KNOW. I KNOW YOU ALL ARE.
AND I DO NOT UNDERTAKE THIS LIGHTLY.
PLEASE. COME WITH ME, AT LEAST AS FAR AS MOUNT ZOAR.
ONCE WE ARE THERE, I BELIEVE I WILL BE ABLE TO SHOW YOU THINGS THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR WAY OF THINKING.
MOSS MAN? WHAT SAY YOU?

Mount Zoar
On the terminator between the light and dark hemispheres of Eternia
FOLLOW ME.
I HAVE MISGIVINGS--
YOU'VE FOLLOWED ME THIS FAR. A LITTLE FURTHER, PLEASE.


SEE HOW THE WALLS OF THE TEMPLE SPEAK TO US?
SEE THE INSCRIPTIONS?
ZOAR IS THE STAR SEED. SHE IS THE FIRST LIGHT.
SHE ABIDES AT THE HEART OF THE RINGS OF SUBTERNIA, THE UNDER-WORLD.
SHE HAS EXISTED FOR ETERNITY.
BEFORE THE RISE OF MAN, THE FIRST ONES WORSHIPPED HER.
THEY KNEW HER AS SERPOS.
THE FIRST ONES WERE SNAKE MEN, MY KING. THEY ARE LONG GONE TO DUST, LOST TO HISTORY, BUT THEIR EMPIRE WAS MIGHTY BEFORE EVER MAN'S AROSE.
ZOAR, SERPOS, HOROKOTH... WHATEVER NAME SHE ANSWERS TO, SHE IS A PRESENCE. SHE IS A LIVING THING, A SENTIENCE, A LIFE-FORCE.
SHE CREATED THE SWORD OF POWER, THE PLANET, THE UNIVERSE. SHE IS WHAT BINDS ETERNIA TO THE INFINITE. IN DEATH, THE SORCERESS HAS BECOME ONE WITH ZOAR.
SO ZOAR CAN RE-CREATE THE SORCERESS.

ARE YOU BUYING THIS? SOME SENTIENT COSMIC LIFE-FORCE--
SHHH!
YOU ARE TOYING WITH THAT WHICH IS FORBIDDEN, MY LORD.
THEN REGARD THE PROPHESY, ENGRAVED HERE.
SEE?
AS INSCRIBED BY THE ANCIENT COUNCIL OF ELDERS, IT SAYS THAT IN THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS, WHICH BEGINS WITH THE DEATH OF THE SORCERESS, A MIGHTY WARRIOR WILL TRAVERSE SUBTERNIA TO HEAL THE SURFACE WORLD.
THIS PROPHESY RELATES TO ADAM.
HIS SWORD WAS FORGED BY KING GRAYSKULL FROM THE STAR SEED'S FIRES. HE ALONE HAS THE POWER TO OPEN THE GATES OF SUBTERNIA.
HE ALONE HAS THE POWER TO CONFRONT THE INFINITE ENERGY OF ZOAR.
PERHAPS... PERHAPS, BUT--

THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW.
WHEN I LAY WOUNDED ON THE FIELD AT SARNSCEPTOR, I HAD A VISION...
YOU TOLD ME SO!
A BEING CAME TO ME. I THINK HIS NAME WAS ZODAC.
HE TOLD ME THAT EVEN WITH MY NEW POWER, I CANNOT WIN THE WAR AGAINST THE HORDE DIRECTLY.
BUT HE SAID I WOULD SOON BE OFFERED A NEW CHALLENGE, AN INDIRECT MEANS OF COMBATTING THE OCCUPATION OF OUR WORLD.
HE TOLD ME I MUST SEEK OUT WHAT LIES WITHIN...
I WOULD LOVE IT IF I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO HADN'T GONE ALL MYSTICAL MUMBO-JUMBO RIGHT NOW.

ADAM'S WORDS ARE *TELLING*. SUBTERNIA INDEED... *LIES WITHIN*. PERHAPS...
PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT AND OUR *SALVATION* IS THERE.
LET US RESOLVE AND GO, THEN. THE *ENTRANCE* TO SUBTERNIA IS HERE BENEATH THE TEMPLE, AND ADAM'S SWORD IS THE KEY THAT WILL *UNLOCK* IT.
LET US OPEN THE GATES OF THE UNDERWORLD.
"OPEN THE GATES OF THE UNDERWORLD"? *SERIOUSLY*?
REALLY, JUST ME?

THE GATEWAY TO THE FIRST CIRCLE.
LEGEND SAYS THAT SUBTERNIA IS MADE OF SIX RINGS OR CIRCLES.
INDEED. DREAMS, EARTH, SKY, WAR, DEATH AND ETERNITY. WE MUST TRAVERSE THEM ALL TO REACH THE GODDESS.
SOME WILL BE TREACHEROUS.

AND WE'LL BE STRONG.
LET'S TRY THIS.
I HAVE THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, AND THAT POWER WAS *GIVEN* TO ME BY ZOAR.
RRRWLL
SKRNCHH
THE GATES ARE *RESPONDING* TO THE POWER OF THE SWORD! THEY ARE OPENING!

COME. THE FIRST CIRCLE IS THE RING OF DREAMS.
DREAMS?
HOW TOUGH COULD THAT BE?

YEAH. GREAT QUESTION, TEELA.

WHAT LIES WITHIN
part 3

Dan Abnett Writer

Michael S. O'Hare Artist and Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Frazer Irving

SO WARNED KING RANDOR...
...FAR BENEATH THE SACRED MOUNT ZOAR, AS THE GATES OPENED TO THE FIRST CIRCLE OF THE UNDERWORLD...
THE REALM OF DREAM HAS BECOME NIGHTMARE!
THOSE BRAVE SOULS WHO HAD JOINED HIM ON HIS PERILOUS QUEST INTO THE SIX CIRCLES OF SUBTERNIA HEARD THE KING'S WORDS...
--TEELA--
--MOSS MAN--
--STRATOS--
--EVEN THE MIGHTY HE-MAN AND BATTLECAT.
GRWWWLL
BUT THERE WAS NO TIME TO APPRECIATE THE FULL MEANING OF THEM.

FOR THEY HAD ENTERED THE UNDERWORLD AND, UPON THE VERY INSTANT OF THEIR ARRIVAL--

-- HAD FOUND A PLAGUE OF MONSTERS ALL ABOUT THEM.

THE RING OF DREAMS? OF DREAMS? REALLY?

I'M THINKING WAY TOO MUCH CHEESE BEFORE BEDTIME!

TEELA JEERED AT DEATH IN HER USUAL MANNER. SHE LAUGHED IN ITS FACE.

BUT EVEN SHE COULD FEEL THAT THERE WAS SCANT TIME FOR WORDS.

THE BATTLE WAS TOO INTENSE.

THE MONSTERS WERE TOO FAST AND TOO RELENTLESS, AND FAR, FAR TOO MANY.

THERE WAS ONLY SLAY... OR BE SLAIN!

I WOULD NEVER PETITION COWARDICE, BUT THIS IS UNTENABLE!
WE MUST RETREAT! WE MUST GO BACK!
THE WAY IS BARRED! THE GATEWAY HAS CLOSED!
ADAM OPENED IT ONCE! HE HAS THE POWER IN HIM!
HE CAN OPEN IT AGAIN!
NO. THERE IS NO "GO BACK."
THERE IS ONLY "FORWARD."

WE HAVE PLEDGED TO CROSS THE SIX CIRCLES OF SUBTERNIA.
WE HAVE SWORN TO FIND THE GODDESS ZOAR, WHO'S LIGHT DWELLS AT THE HEART OF THE UNDERWORLD!
SHE IS THE LIFE-FORCE. SHE CAN DELIVER US.
ONLY SHE CAN SAVE ETERNIA.
SO THERE IS NO "GO BACK"!
AGREED, FATHER! WE STAND FIRM, NO MATTER THE ODDS!
BUT WHAT ARE THESE FOUL CREATURES?
YEAH, THIS IS THE RING OF DREAMS, RIGHT? THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE EASY GOING!

INDEED, THIS WAS THE CIRCLE WHERE ALL THE DREAMS OF ETERNIA WERE PRESERVED.
BUT THE UNDERWORLD IS BUT A MIRROR OF THE OVERWORLD--
I UNDERSTAND YOU, OLD FRIEND!
THE SURFACE WORLD HAS BEEN TWISTED AND POLLUTED BY THE HORRORS OF THE HORDE'S INVASION..
--SO THE CIRCLE OF DREAMS HAS ACCORDINGLY BECOME A PLACE OF NIGHTMARES AND DARK TERRORS.
JUST SO.

GOOOOOOD.
NOW I UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING TO TEAR ME LIMB FROM LIMB.
DON'T EXPECT THE WORST...
--FIGHT TO KEEP IT AT BAY!
NONE OF THEM NEEDED TO BE TOLD. THEY WERE SIX OF THE MOST POWERFUL AND EXPERIENCED COMBATANTS ON ALL OF ETERNIA.
TEELA, CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL GUARD AND DAUGHTER OF THE SORCERESS THEY SOUGHT TO RESURRECT BY THE MERCY OF THE GODDESS.

STRATOS, KING OF AVION, HIS WING-EDGES RAZOR-SHARP, HIS STRIKES SWIFT AND SURE...
...THE NATURE GOD KREANN'OT N'NOROSH, CALLED BY HIS FRIENDS MOSS MAN, WHOSE PHYSICAL STRENGTH WAS MATCHED ONLY BY HIS COMMAND OF ALL PLANT LIFE...
...RANDOR, EXILED KING OF ETERNIA, STRONG OF ARM AND SKILLED IN ALL WEAPONS...
THE LOYAL AND FURIOUS BATTLECAT...
...AND HE-MAN HIMSELF, THE GREATEST WARRIOR OF ALL.

THE WAR THEY MADE ACROSS THE CIRCLE OF DREAMS LASTED A FULL DAY AND A NIGHT.

AND THEN THE NIGHTMARES BEGAN TO WIN...
WATCH YOURSELVES! SOMETHING'S COMING AND IT'S EVEN BIGGER THAN THE LAST FEW!
LOOK OUT!
WHOOMPOH!

TEELA!
TEELA!
GREAT GODS... IT SWALLOWED THEM WHOLE!
TEELA... MOSS MAN...
STRATOS...
NO!
NOOO!
NOTHING. ITS BELLY IS EMPTY...
WHERE ARE THEY...?

BATTLECAT! FIGHT ON! WITH ME!
THERE IS NO TIME TO MOURN OUR FALLEN!
FIGHT ON!
TEELA...?
TEELA'S DEAD.
SHE'S DEAD.
GRAAAGH!

OW.
OW. ALSO, OW.
LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS...
GETTING SWALLOWED. NGHH!
STRATOS? MOSS MAN?
WHERE IN THE NAME OF ETERNIA IS THIS?

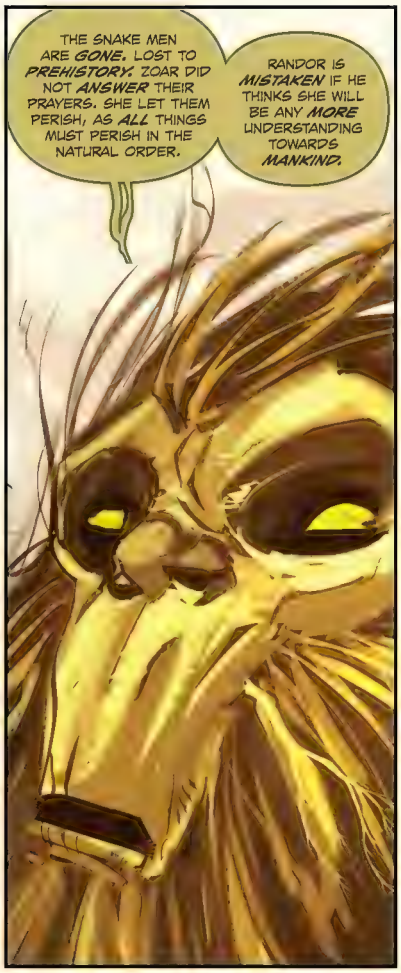
I DON'T KNOW. DID WE... DID WE GET EATEN BY SOMETHING?
TOTALLY.
SO... NOT THAT I'M COMPLAINING, BUT HOW ARE WE STILL ALIVE?
IT DISPLACED US.
MOSS MAN!
REST YOURSELF, DEAR FRIEND! YOU ARE HURT!
LISTEN ... LISTEN TO ME, BOTH OF YOU. THERE IS VERY LITTLE TIME.
THE MONSTER THAT DEVOURED US ACTED AS A GATE AND PROJECTED US TO ANOTHER OF SUBTERNIA'S CIRCLES.
THIS IS THE CIRCLE OF EARTH.
IT'S JUST WASTE LAND.
OF COURSE. JUST AS THE CIRCLE OF DREAMS HAS BEEN SYMPATHETICALLY REDUCED TO A REALM OF NIGHTMARE BY THE WAR IN THE OVERWORLD...
...SO THE CIRCLE OF EARTH HAS BEEN RENDERED LIFELESS.
MOSS MAN?
I AM DYING, TEELA. THERE IS NO LIFE-FORCE HERE, NO VITALITY. NO BIOSPHERE.
THIS PLACE IS DEAD, AND BECAUSE OF IT, MY LIFE EBBS AWAY TOO. FASTER THAN I WOULD WISH IT.

WE'LL PROTECT YOU, ANCIENT KREANN'OT N'NOROSH!
THIS DRY, ARID, DESICCATED REALM HAS DANGERS ENOUGH.
PROTECT YOURSELVES FIRST, DEAR TEELA...
TEELA!
ROCK MEN! ROCK MEN!

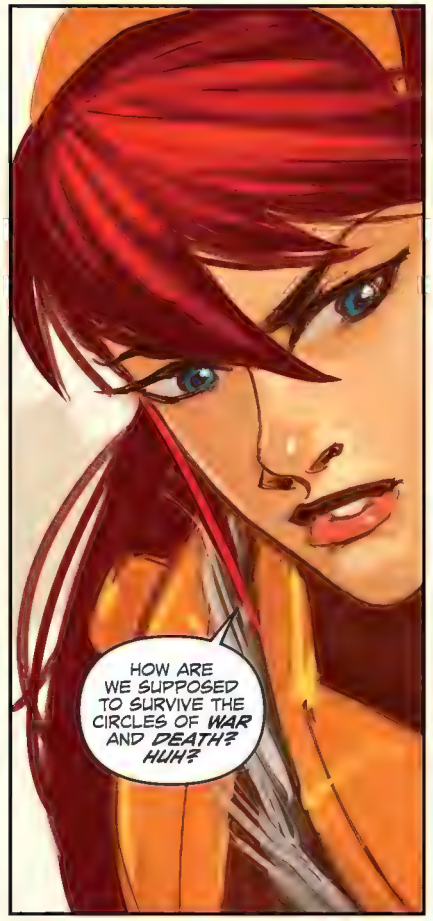
THE CIRCLE OF DREAMS...
FIGHT ON, FATHER!
IT IS RELENTLESS... THEY ARE ENDLESS...
FIGHT ON, I SAY!
FATHER AND SON!
AGREED! FATHER AND SON! TOGETHER!

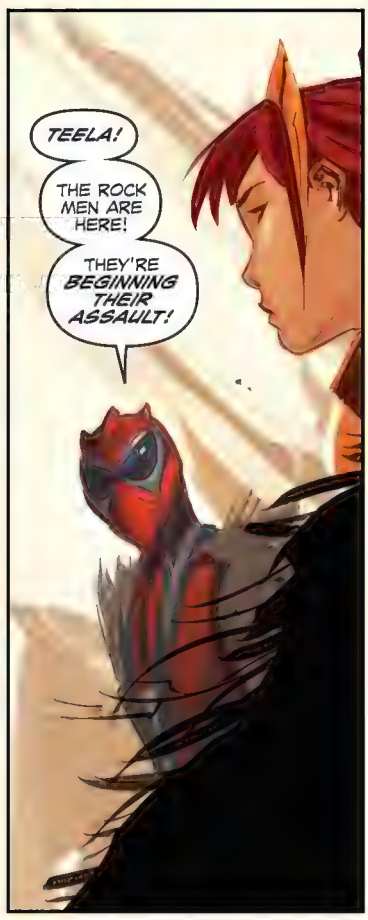
THE CIRCLE OF EARTH...
WE CAN HIDE HERE.
NOT FOR LONG. THE ROCK MEN ARE CLOSING IN. THEY WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE SCALING THIS CRAG.
TEELA...
WE WILL SURVIVE THIS, I SWEAR.
I WILL NOT. MY LIFE IS ALREADY SLIPPING AWAY.
DON'T SAY THAT!
I KNOW, I KNOW... THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE...
BUT IN CASE THERE ISN'T...
...THERE ARE THINGS THAT I NEED TO TELL YOU.
OF THE ANCIENT LORE, THINGS ONLY I AM OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER. IF I DIE, THESE THINGS WILL PASS FROM US. YOU MUST KNOW THEM NOW.

ZOAR IS ETERNAL. SHE IS ALL-POWERFUL.
BUT SHE IS UNFORGIVING. HER LIGHT IS UNFORGIVING.
BEFORE MANKIND AROSE ON ETERNIA, THERE WERE THE FIRST ONES... THE SNAKE MEN... THEY WORSHIPPED ZOAR AS SERPOS...
WHAT'S THIS GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?


THE SNAKE MEN ARE GONE. LOST TO PREHISTORY. ZOAR DID NOT ANSWER THEIR PRAYERS. SHE LET THEM PERISH, AS ALL THINGS MUST PERISH IN THE NATURAL ORDER.
RANDOR IS MISTAKEN IF HE THINKS SHE WILL BE ANY MORE UNDERSTANDING TOWARDS MANKIND.

WELL, YOU KNOW, I'D LOVE TO TELL HIM THAT, BUT WE'RE KINDA LOST RIGHT NOW IN THE CIRCLES OF THE UNDERWORLD. FORGET MYTHICAL SNAKE MEN, OLD FELLAH, TELL ME THIS...
... THE FIRST TWO CIRCLES OF SUBTERNIA HAVE PROVED VIRTUALLY LETHAL, AND THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO BE THE EASY ONES. DREAMS AND EARTH.


HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO SURVIVE THE CIRCLES OF WAR AND DEATH? HUH?


TEELA!
THE ROCK MEN ARE HERE!
THEY'RE BEGINNING THEIR ASSAULT!

THE CIRCLE OF DREAMS...
BEHOLD! THE NEXT GATEWAY! ANOTHER CIRCLE AWAITS US!
AT LAST!
I HAVE THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, AND THAT POWER WAS GIVEN TO ME BY ZOAR.
NOTHING! THE GATEWAY DOES NOT RESPOND!
LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN.
ANYWHERE IS BETTER THAN HERE!
I FEAR THE WORST, MY SON.
WE HAVE LINGERED IN THE RING OF DREAMS FOR TOO LONG...

... IT HAS BECOME OUR NIGHTMARE, WHERE THE GATES ARE SEALED AND WE CANNOT ESCAPE!

WHAT LIES WITHIN
part 4

Dan Abnett Writer

Michael S. O'Hare Artist and Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Pop Mhan

AND SO CRIED HE-MAN...
...TRAPPED DEEP IN THE REALM OF DREAMS, THE FIRST CIRCLE OF THE UNDERWORLD...
FATHER! FATHER! MY KING!
FIGHT ON! WE WILL NOT BE BEATEN!
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY OUT! THE GATEWAY IS SEALED!
OUR ONLY CHANCE FOR LIFE IS TO SLAY EVERY NIGHTMARE THE REALM OF DREAMS THROWS AT US!
AGREED.
ABSOLUTELY.
ROOWWWLL

NHH!
OF COURSE, THE DEED IS EASIER TO SAY THAN TO DO!
NOT IF WE FIGHT TOGETHER AND GUARD ONE ANOTHER'S BACKS!
THOOM
GRWWWLL_L
SEE? OUR LOYAL BATTLE-CAT KNOWS HOW IT SHOULD BE DONE!

WHO RUSHES TO OUR AID?
I CANNOT SEE!
THE FOG OF WAR IS TOO DENSE! ALL IS RED MIST AND SMOKE!
THE VOLLEY OF SHOTS COMES FROM ABOVE, DOES IT NOT?
YES, I-- SOUL OF ETERNIA!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
WHAT IS THIS? SOMEONE JOINS THE FIGHT!
HOPE IS NOT LOST!
NOT LOST INDEED, MY SON!
ZOOOOOSH!

HOLD *TIGHT,* ADAM! YOU *TOO,* MY LIEGE!

WE'RE COMING IN TO *SAVE* YOU!

GIVE 'EM HELL WITH THAT CANNON, MOSS MAN!
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU FIGHTING FIT AGAIN!
FWISH FWISH FWISH FWISH
YOU CARRIED ME FROM THE DEAD REALM OF EARTH, TEELA!
FREED FROM THAT LIFELESS WASTE, I AM REJUVENATED!
ALSO, THIS SHOT-CANNON IS MOST EFFICACIOUS IN THE REMOVAL OF KING RANDOR'S FOES!
CHUGGA CHUGGA CHUGGA CHUGGA
I SEE THAT! THIS LANCE-LAUNCHER IS ALSO PRETTY EFFECTIVE!
YOU OKAY BACK THERE, STRATOS, LORD OF THE SKY?
I MOST CERTAINLY AM, TEELA.
THIS FLYING MACHINE IS MAGNIFICENT. IT RESPONDS TO MY EVERY DIRECTION.

TIME TO GO FOR A RESCUE, I THINK! HOLD STATION, STRATOS! WE'RE DROPPING ROPES!
HEY, ADAM! CATCH HOLD!
GOT IT!
I HAVE THE LINE!
CLIMB, THEN, MY LORD! FOR ETERNIA'S SAKE!
GAAH! THEY'RE NIPPING AT MY HEELS!

NOT SO MUCH NOW!
FWISH FWISH FWISH
FWISH FWISH
YOU'RE SAFE NOW, ADAM.
WELCOME ABOARD, MY LIEGE!
THANK YOU, OLD FRIEND.
WE'RE NOT ALL SAFE YET!
RRRMMWWWLL?

COME ON! BATTLE-CAT! COME ON! POUNCE, BABY-CAT! WE GOT YA! COME TO TEELA!
GRRROOORR!
THERE YOU GO, YOU BEAUTIFUL THING!
CLAMBER IN, BRAVE SOUL! NO ONE WAS GOING TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND!
RWWLLM
STRATOS! TURN US ABOUT AND GET US OUT OF HERE!
WITH GREAT PLEASURE, OLD FRIEND!

I HAVE... A LOT OF QUESTIONS...
WHAT IS THIS CRAFT? WHERE DID IT COME FROM? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT--
TO ANSWER THE FIRST, THIS IS A MACHINE FROM THE REALM OF THE SKY.
MY FRIEND, THE KING AND HIS SON HAVE ENDURED A GREAT DEAL.
PERHAPS WE MIGHT BE LESS ENIGMATIC WITH OUR EXPLANATIONS...
WE WERE LOST IN THE RING OF EARTH.
STRATOS, WITH THE CUNNING OF A HAWK, USED HIS AFFINITY WITH THE AIR TO GUIDE US OUT.
HOW DID YOU EVEN GET THERE?
THE NIGHTMARE THAT SWALLOWED US SPAT US OUT THERE.
IT WASN'T THE NICEST THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME.
THE RING OF EARTH IS A PERILOUS PLACE. LIKE THE REALM OF DREAMS, IT HAS BEEN SYMPATHETICALLY RAVAGED AND TRANSFORMED BY THE HORRORS OF THE SURFACE WORLD.

IT IS REDUCED TO AN ARID, STERILE WASTE. THE ONLY THINGS WE FOUND WERE ROCK MEN ENGAGED IN THEIR MINDLESS CONFLICTS.
WITH NO LIFE FORCES TO NOURISH ME, I ALMOST DIED THERE, BUT WHILE MY STRENGTH EBBED, STRATOS SCOUTED. HE FOUND A WAY OUT.
THE CIRCLE OF SKY IS UNIQUE IN THAT IT CONNECTS ALL OF THE SIX RINGS OF THE UNDERWORLD.
IT ALLOWS US TO CROSS BETWEEN THEM?
EXACTLY. THROUGH THE CIRCLE OF SKY, WE CAN FLY TO ANY OF THE RINGS OF SUBTERNIA.
THIS IS GOOD NEWS INDEED.
AT LAST, PERHAPS, WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS, BUT THIS FLYING MACHINE... DID YOU JUST FIND IT?
STRATOS DID. THERE ARE LOTS OF THEM.
WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT, STRATOS?
YOU'LL SEE FOR YOURSELF, VERY SOON.
WE'RE ABOUT TO BREAK THE CLOUD COVER...

...BEHOLD, THE CIRCLE OF SKY, HE-MAN. BEHOLD.
IT IS FILLED WITH THE THINGS THAT THE WINDS OF FATE HAVE WASHED UP.
FLOTSAM. JETSAM. ALL THE THINGS BLOWN HERE FROM THE SKIES OF ENDLESS WORLDS.

IT'S INCREDIBLE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. ALL I UNDERSTAND IS THE LIVING EARTH.
BUT I UNDERSTAND IT. IT RESONATES WITH ME.
THIS AIRY REALM MAKES MY HEART SING. IT IS SKY OF ALL SKIES.
AND IT REALLY GIVES US ACCESS TO ALL OF THE OTHER CIRCLES?
YES, IT DOES. IT IS A SHORTCUT, HE-MAN.
WE CAN REACH THE RING OF ETERNITY DIRECTLY, WITHOUT HAVING TO STRUGGLE THROUGH THE OTHER CIRCLES OF SUBTERNIA.
YOU MEAN BYPASS THE CIRCLES OF WAR AND DEATH?
INDEED. THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN THE MOST DANGEROUS OF ALL. WE CAN GO STRAIGHT TO THE GODDESS.
ZOAR IS GUIDING US, I BELIEVE.
THAT... THAT IS GOOD.

MANY HOURS PASS. WITH NOTHING BUT THE BEAT OF THE CRAFT'S ANCIENT PROPELLERS AND THE MOAN OF THE WIND...
IT'S DEFINITELY GETTING COLDER.
IT IS, AND SEE THERE?
STORMS, BIG ONES.
IT FIGURES THAT THIS CIRCLE, LIKE ALL THE OTHERS, WOULD BE BLIGHTED BY THE TORMENT OF THE SURFACE WORLD.
STRATOS! THERE ARE VAST STORMS AHEAD OF US!
I'VE SEEN THEM, HE-MAN! I WILL STEER US AROUND THEM FOR FEAR THEY SMASH US OUT OF THE AIR.

YOU FEEL THAT CHILL, MY LORD? I BELIEVE THAT WE ARE NOW PASSING OVER THE RING OF DEATH.
ANOTHER FEW HOURS, AND WE WILL REACH THE RING OF ETERNITY AT THE HEART OF THE SUBTERNIA.
SO THIS MORTAL COLD IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE CLOSE TO DEATH, EH?
OLD FRIEND, YOU'VE BEEN AT THE HELM FOR HOURS.
REST. LET ME TAKE A TURN FOR A WHILE.
THOSE STORMS ARE BUILDING FAST. FASTER THAN I EXPECTED.
WE MUST TURN TO A NEW HEADING AT ONCE.
FATHER! STRATOS!
WE MUST COME ABOUT BEFORE WE ENTER THE STORM!
MY LIEGE, YOUR SON IS RIGHT.
SIR, Y-YOU'RE TURNING US THE WRONG WAY!
NO, NO. THIS IS THE COURSE WE SHOULD FOLLOW...

MY LORD, I IMPLORE YOU! THE STORM IS UPON US!
KRAAKATHOOOM
HOLD ON, EVERYBODY! WE'RE GOING DOWN!

SSKKRKRYKRKRNNTCHH!

EVERYONE ALL RIGHT? EVERYONE *ALIVE?*
DEFINE "ALL RIGHT."

WHERE ARE WE?
THE RING OF DEATH.
IT IS MOST UNFORTUNATE THAT OUR VOYAGE SHOULD END *HERE* SO PREMATURELY.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. KING RANDOR SEEMED TO STEER US INTO THE STORM ON *PURPOSE...*

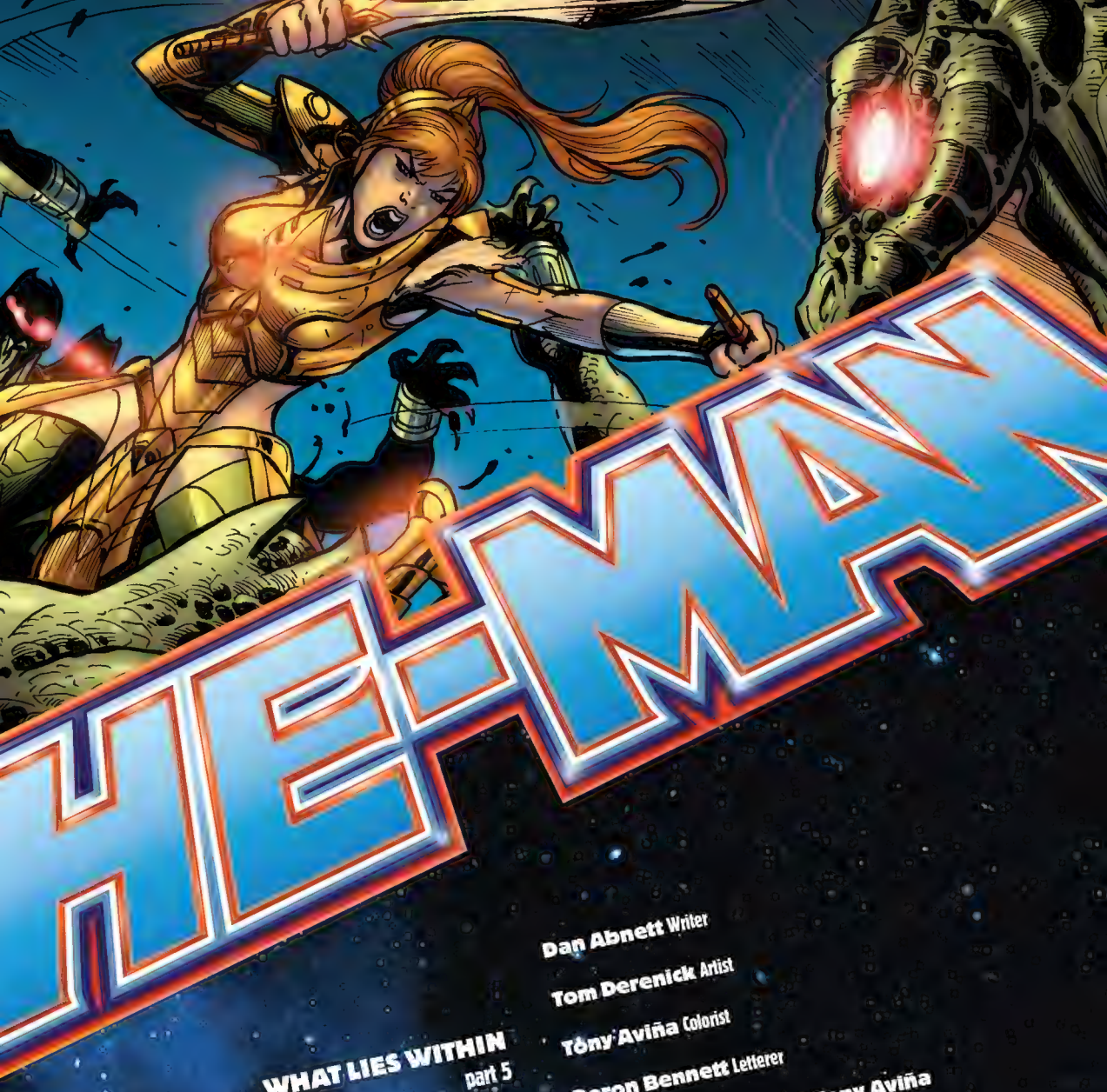
WHERE *IS* HE? *HAS ANYONE SEEN MY FATHER SINCE WE CRASHED?*
HE MUST STILL BE IN THE *WRECKAGE!*
FIND HIM! *HURRY!*

WE'RE *NOT* ALONE HERE!
WHAT *ARE* THEY?
THINGS I NEVER THOUGHT TO SEE AGAIN. THINGS I THOUGHT HAD GONE TO DEATH AND DUST *LONG* BEFORE THE RISE OF MAN...

"...THEY ARE THE FIRST ONES, TEELA. THEY ARE SNAKE MEN!"
RANDOR! OLD FRIEND, ARE YOU THERE?
FATHER, ANSWER ME! ARE YOU ALIVE?
YESSS...
HOLD ON! JUST HOLD ON!
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, RANDOR? WHY DID YOU TAKE US INTO THE STORM?
BECAUSE DEATH WAS WAITING FOR US THERE.
OH GODS! NO!
R-RANDOR?
THERE IS NO RANDOR. THERE HAS NOT BEEN A RANDOR FOR A LONG TIME NOW. THERE IS ONLY WHAT LIES WITHIN...

...THERE IS ONLY
HSSSSSSS!

KJL



WHAT LIES WITHIN
part 5

Dan Abnett Writer

Tom Derenick Artist

Tony Aviña Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ken Lashley & Tony Aviña

CAUGHT IN THE DARK SUBTERNIAN REALM OF DEATH, AT THE GATES OF ETERNITY...
...HE-MAN COULD BARELY FIND HIS VOICE.
F-FATHER?
YOUR FATHER WAS JUST A MASK. A CLOAK.
I TOLD YOU, I AM HSSSS.
IT IS. IT IS HSSSS HIMSELF! I THOUGHT HE WAS LONG GONE FROM THE MORTAL PLANE!
YOU SAY THE NAME LIKE WE SHOULD KNOW IT, MOSS MAN!
HE IS THE ANCIENT LORD OF THE SNAKE MEN, THE MONARCH WHO RULED ETERNIA BEFORE ALL OTHERS.
HE AND HIS KIND WERE THE FIRST ONES, WHO CAME BEFORE WARM-BLOODED LIFE AND--
NO...

---HE IS A USURPER AND HE WILL DIE!

I THINK NOT.
UUHGGKK!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHO YOU ARE DEALING WITH. YOU HAVE NO IDEA OF MY RESOLVE.
MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO, I WAS A KING! I RULED THIS WORLD! I RULED THE SNAKE MEN!
I KNELT TO ONE THING AND ONE ALONE - SERPOS! THE MOTHER GODDESS AT THE HEART OF ETERNIA, THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSE!
GGGGGRKK!
I WANTED TO SHARE THE POWER OF SERPOS, TO BE AS GREAT AS MY GODDESS. GREATER EVEN!

SO I DID THE FORBIDDEN! I JOURNEYED TO THE CORE OF ETERNIA TO TAKE HER POWER FOR MYSELF!
I DARED TO GAZE UPON THE "TRUE FACE" OF THE GODDESS!
KKRRRNNLCHHH
NNHHH...
AND JUST AS YOU HAVE UNDERESTIMATED ME, I HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE PRICE! NO MERE MORTAL COULD EVER WIELD SUCH POWER!
AN UNFORGIVING UNIVERSE CRUSHED ME, AND BROUGHT THIS ICY DEVASTATION DOWN UPON MY PEOPLE.
I ALONE SURVIVED. I ALONE HAVE SPENT THESE AGES SCHEMING TO FREE ETERNIA FROM THE UPSTART RACE OF MEN AND RESTORE MY PEOPLE.
SO DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE MY RESOLVE. THIS IS A WAR THAT HAS BEEN MILLENIA COMING.
TAKE HIM APART!
TEELA, BEWARE---

---WE HAVE TROUBLES OF OUR OWN!
THE SNAKE MEN ARE UPON US!
NO!
YOU TOLD US THESE THINGS WERE LONG DEAD, MOSS MAN!
THIS IS THE UNDERWORLD, TEELA! THE CIRCLE OF DEATH!
THE LAWS OF MORTALITY ARE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT HERE! I CANNOT EXPLAIN IT!

I SENSE THERE IS MORE TO THE MYSTERY, OLD FRIEND!
THERE IS A WHIFF OF SORCERY TO THIS!
"SEE HOW MORE AND YET MORE ARISE FROM THEIR ICY GRAVES? IT IS AS THOUGH SOME ARCANE POWER IS RAISING THEM FROM THE DEAD!"
"SOME POWER"?
YOU FOOL, STRATOS. THERE IS ONLY ONE POWER. ONLY ONE THAT MATTERS.
THE FIRE OF CREATION. THE STAR SEED.
AND I HAVE THE KEY TO THAT, DON'T I, HE-MAN?
HE-MAN?

WHERE HAVE YOU GONE?
NOWHERE.
AGHHHK!
KTOOOOM
WHERE IS MY FATHER? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH HIM, MONSTER?
HE'S GONE! DEAD! AND YOU'LL NEVER KNOW HOW LONG I HAVE OCCUPIED HIS FLESH!
DID I BECOME RANDOR WHEN WE WERE SEPARATED AT SARNCEPTOR? OR WAS I RANDOR THE DAY YOU WERE BORN?

NOOOO!
ACCEPT THE TRUTH, MAMMAL!
YOU AND YOUR FATHER WERE JUST PIECES IN A SCHEME THAT HAS TAKEN ME EONS TO ENGINEER!
I HAVE WORN THOUSANDS OF FACES DOWN THROUGH HISTORY TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL! YOUR FATHER IS BUT THE LATEST!
SHHRRRKKKK
YOU'RE INSANE!
YAARGHH!

INSANE?
YOU KNOW NOTHING OF MY MIND...
SPLAT!!!
...OR MY POWERS!
OH GODS!
NOW BOW DOWN BEFORE ME---
--SO THAT I CAN FINISH MY WORK!
NHHH!

UGHHGH!
IT SEEMS I WILL NEED--
-- MY MOST FORMIDABLE WEAPON TO SUBDUE YOU...
MMM
GOOM
KRAKOOM

TELL ME THEN, MONSTER. SNAKE-THING.
WHAT IS THIS KEY YOU SPEAK OF?
WHY, YOU ARE, OF COURSE.
YOU ARE THE KEY.
SHKOO
BOOM!
AND USING YOU, I WILL UNLOCK THE INFINITE POWER OF THE STAR SEED AND REVIVE MY PEOPLE.
THE FIRST ONES WILL AWAKE FROM THE DEAD AND RECLAIM ETERNIA FROM THE MAMMALS!
IT IS THEIR DIVINE RIGHT!
YOUR SWORD WAS FORGED BY GRAYSKULL FROM THE STAR SEED'S POWERS, HE-MAN!
THAT IS WHY YOU COULD OPEN THE GATES OF SUBTERNIA! YOU ARE A FRAGMENT OF THE HEART OF CREATION!
YOUR VERY PRESENCE HERE IN THE CIRCLE OF DEATH HAS PROVIDED ENOUGH LIFE-ENERGY TO AWAKEN SOME OF MY SNAKE MEN.

RANDOR'S QUEST TO PETITION THE GODDESS FOR THE RETURN OF YOUR LOST SORCERESS WAS JUST A RUSE TO LURE YOU INTO THE UNDERWORLD!
THIS IS NOT ABOUT THE REDEMPTION OF YOUR RACE, HUMAN!
THIS IS NOT ABOUT SAVING YOUR KIND FROM THE HORDE!
I WILL UNLOCK THE FIRES OF CREATION AND INVEST MY LONG-LOST PEOPLE AS GODS! WE WILL RECLAIM ETERNIA!
I WILL HAVE NO PART OF THAT!
YOU WILL HAVE NO CHOICE!

EVEN NOW MY AWAKENING SNAKE MEN ARE ABOUT TO SEND YOUR COMRADES TO THEIR DOOM.
WHAT?
TEELA...
SKKRROOOOMM!!

YOU CARE TOO MUCH FOR OTHERS. IT DISTRACTS YOU.
A FLAW COMMON IN MAMMALS.
SNAKE MEN! YOUR KING COMMANDS! LEAVE THOSE WRETCHES AND COME TO MY SIDE!

THEY'RE--
=HUFF HUFF=
--FALLING BACK. I THOUGHT WE WERE--
=HUFF HUFF=
--FINISHED THERE.
WE MIGHT AS WELL BE, TEELA.
LOOK!

"OUR SERPENTINE FOES HAVE CAPTURED HE-MAN!"

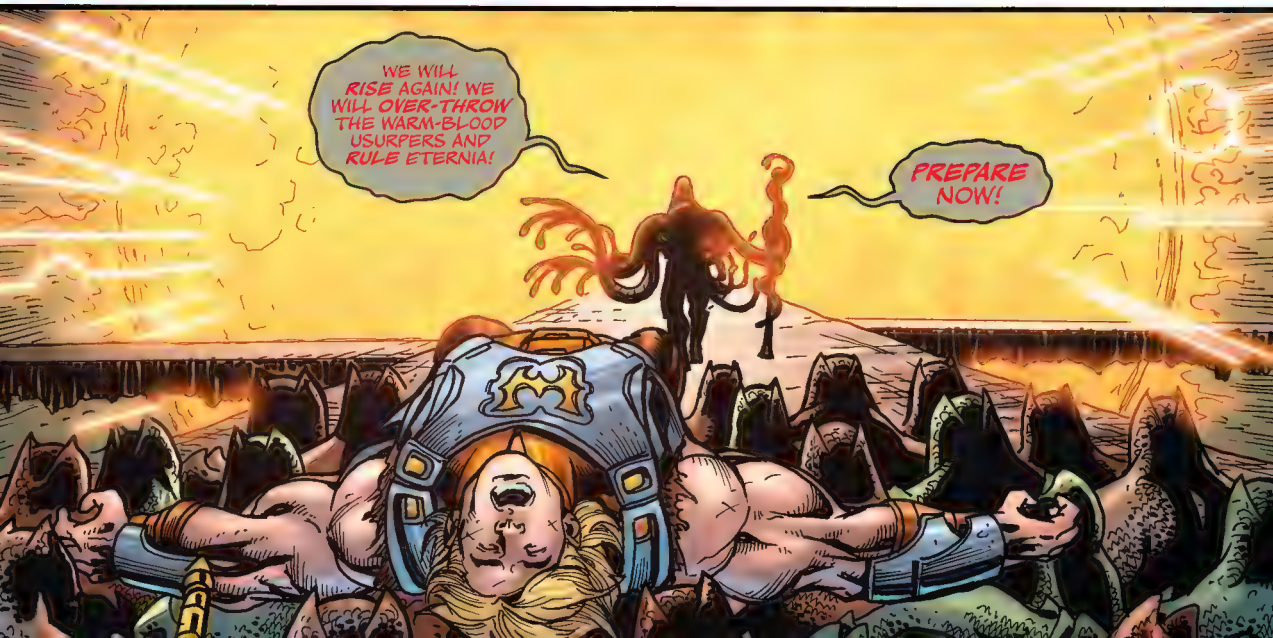
TAKE HIM! BEAR HIM UP!
THE FINAL GATE AWAITS US!

WE'VE GOT TO--
TEELA, HSSSS POSSESSES EXTRAORDINARY POWER, AND COMMANDS AN ARMY OF REAWAKENED FIRST ONES.
WE COULD FIGHT ALL DAY AND ALL NIGHT AND NOT REACH ADAM'S SIDE.
THEN WHAT?
ANOTHER SCHEME, PERHAPS? ANOTHER PLAN?
PERHAPS WE CAN UTILIZE THE UNIQUE PROPERTIES OF THE RING OF DEATH TO COMBAT THE POWER OF HSSSS?
PERHAPS, STRATOS.
GREAT KREANN'OT N'NOROSH...
...IS KING RANDOR REALLY DEAD?
I AM SORRY, CHILD, YES.
THAT FIEND HAS EVIDENTLY BEEN USING THE HUSK OF HIS FORM AS A DISGUISE FOR A LONG TIME.

AT LAST! THE FINAL GATEWAY APPEARS!
THE DOOR TO ETERNITY REVEALS ITSELF TO US!
IT SENSES THE ENERGY OF OUR KEY, MY SNAKE MEN!
IT OPENS!
ETERNITY AWAITS!

FOLLOW! FOLLOW!
BRING THE HUMAN TO THE FLAME! SO THAT HE WILL SEE THE TRUTH AS I DID!
THERE IS NO "ZOAR" HERE, AND NO "SERPOS" EITHER! THERE IS NO SOUL AT THE HEART OF CREATION!
THERE IS JUST THE STAR SEED, THE WISHFUL DREAM OF CHILD RACES!

WE WALK AT THE BEGINNING OF TIME AND THE BIRTH OF ETERNIA!
IT IS FROM A RELIC SPARK OF THIS EVENT THAT GRAYSKULL FORGED THE SWORD AND MADE HE-MAN!
THUS THE HUMAN HE-MAN WILL BE OUR CONDUIT!
THROUGH HIM, WE CAN SAFELY ACCEPT THE POWER OF ETERNITY!


WE WILL RISE AGAIN! WE WILL OVER-THROW THE WARM-BLOOD USURPERS AND RULE ETERNIA!
PREPARE NOW!

RAISE THE HUMAN UP!
WE MUST CAST HIM INTO THE FIRES OF THIS COLD, INDIFFERENT "MOTHER GODDESS!"
THE STAR SEED!
LET HIM BURN FOR US! I WANT THE POWER! I WANT IT ALL!

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING...
CAN'T WE USE THE REALM OF DEATH TO BRING RANDOR BACK TO LIFE?
NO, TEELA.
THEN WHAT? SOME CONJURATION?
I KNOW OF NONE THAT WOULD WORK IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.
YOU KNOW WHAT? SCREW THIS.
IF FIGHTING SNAKE MEN DAY AND NIGHT IS THE ONLY THING THAT MIGHT EVEN POSSIBLY WORK...
TEELA! CHILD!
...THEN FIGHTING SNAKE MEN DAY AND NIGHT IS WHAT WE DAMN WELL GO WITH!
WHO'S GOT MY BACK?

SOOK

WHAT LIES WITHIN
Part 6

Dan Abnett Writer

Tom Derenick Artist

Tony Aviña Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ryan Sook

IN THE RING OF ETERNITY ITSELF, BEFORE THE FIRES OF THE STAR SEED...
...HE-MAN AWAKES.
W-WHAT?
HIS FIRST WAKING THOUGHT IS THAT HIS FATHER, KING RANDOR, IS DEAD.
HIS SECOND IS THAT THE CRUEL MONSTER HSSSS HAS WORN THE GUISE OF RANDOR FOR LONGER THAN CAN BE IMAGINED.
HIS THIRD IS UNREMITTING DESPAIR.
NOOOOOOO!
ALL IS LOST.
ALL IS LOST.

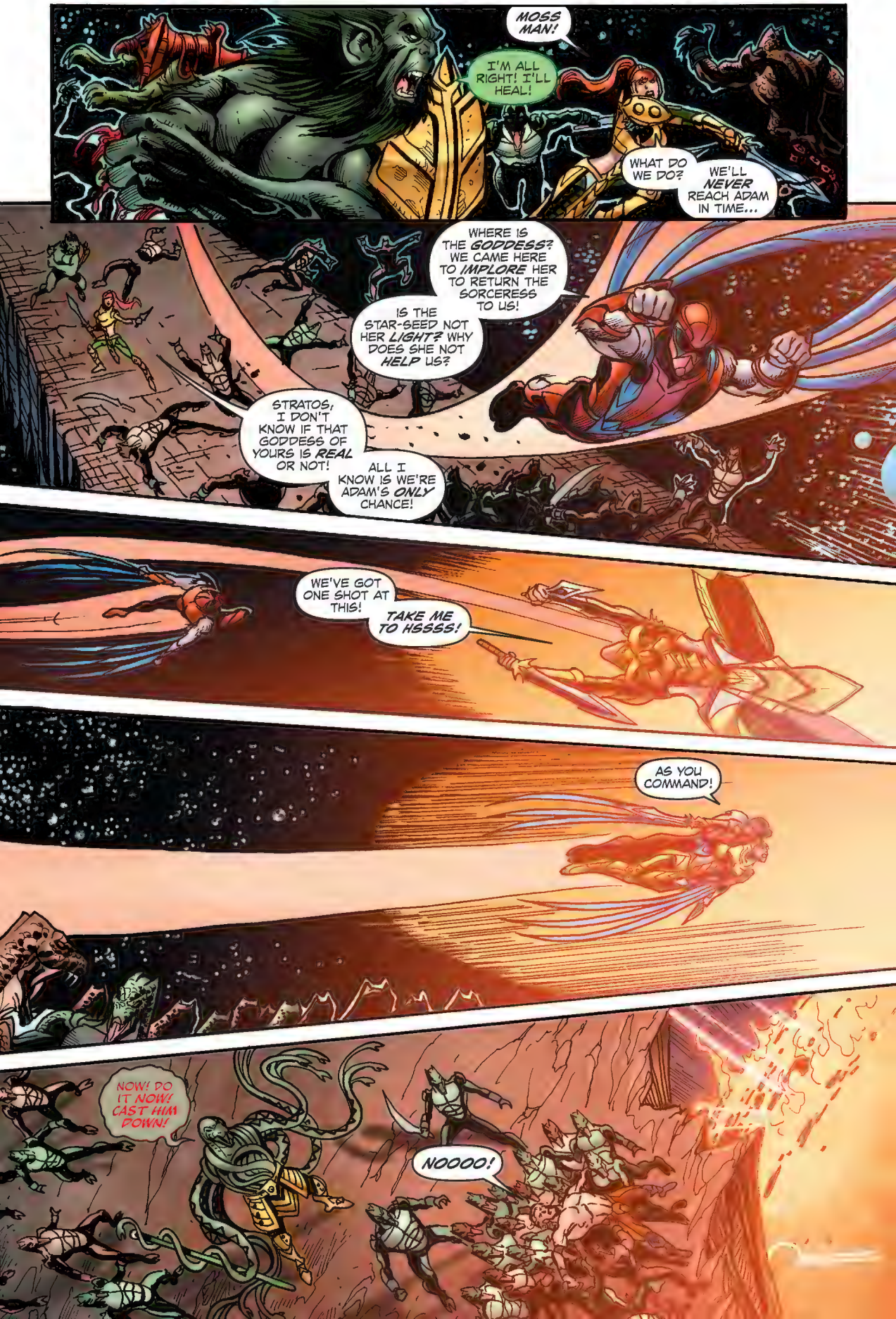
BRING HIM!
BRING THE SPAWN OF GRAYSKULL!
THE HOUR IS UPON US!
CAST HIM INTO THE FIRES OF THE STAR SEED SO THAT WE MAY INHERIT THE POWER!
NO! RELEASE ME! NOOO!

RELEASE ME!
I WILL NOT BOW TO YOU!
KRAK-CHAK!
AH. A LAST ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE DESTINY.
I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED NO LESS.
SUBDUE HIM.
THE SWORD! I WILL HAVE THE SWORD!
YOU WILL ALL PAY WITH YOUR SOULS!
KTHOOM

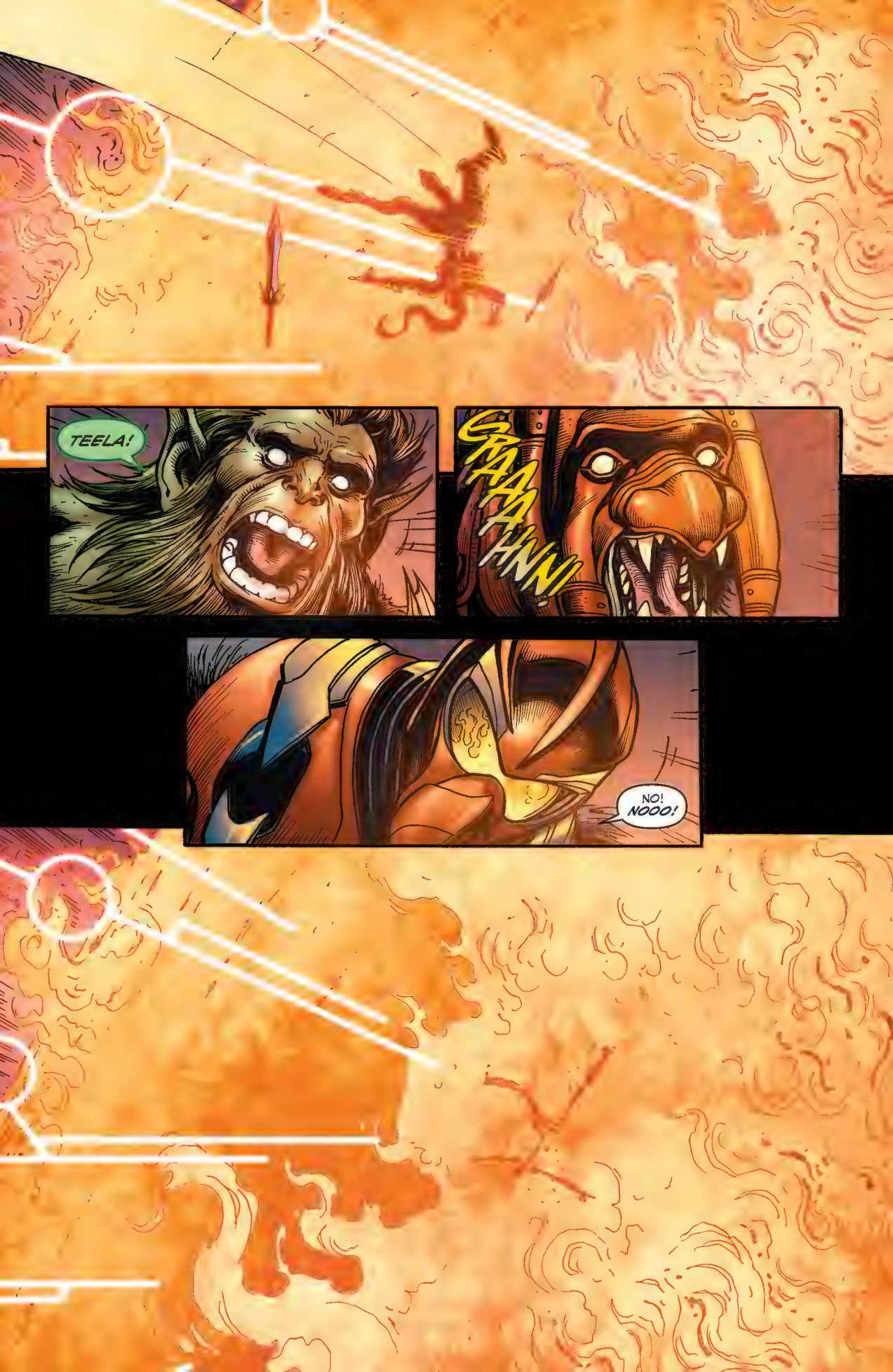
GIVE ME THE SWORD!
THOOM
CRAK
THIS IS ALL YOU SHALL RECEIVE.
ARGHHH---
ARMOR YOURSELF ALL YOU LIKE, IT WILL AVAIL YOU NAUGHT.
MAMMAL? ADAM? KNOW THIS...
THERE IS NOTHING LEFT IN ETERNITY THAT CAN SAVE YOU NOW.

ADAM! HOLD ON, ADAM!
TEELA! THIS IS INSANITY! WE'LL NEVER GET THROUGH THEM ALL! NOT WITHOUT HE-MAN!
WITH RESPECT, MOSS MAN...
..I DON'T INTEND TO STOP TRYING!
EVEN THOUGH I KNOW WE'RE DOOMED!
TEELA IS RIGHT! IF WE DON'T STOP THIS THEN EVERYTHING WE KNOW ENDS!
EVEN IF WE DIE TRYING, TRYING IS THE ONLY THING WE HAVE!

NHHHH--!
TAKE HIM UP! HOLD HIM!
CAST HIM INTO INFINITY!
THEY'RE GOING TO THROW ADAM INTO THE STAR SEED!
I WAS AFRAID OF THIS.
IT WILL CLOSE THE CIRCLE. IT WILL GRANT HSSSS THE POWER HE HAS CRAVED SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME.
HE--
AGGHHH!


MOSS MAN!
I'M ALL RIGHT! I'LL HEAL!
WHAT DO WE DO?
WE'LL NEVER REACH ADAM IN TIME...
WHERE IS THE GODDESS? WE CAME HERE TO IMPLORE HER TO RETURN THE SORCERESS TO US!
IS THE STAR-SEED NOT HER LIGHT? WHY DOES SHE NOT HELP US?
STRATOS, I DON'T KNOW IF THAT GODDESS OF YOURS IS REAL OR NOT!
ALL I KNOW IS WE'RE ADAM'S ONLY CHANCE!
WE'VE GOT ONE SHOT AT THIS!
TAKE ME TO HSSSS!
AS YOU COMMAND!
NOW! DO IT NOW! CAST HIM DOWN!
NOOOO!

FACE ME, MONSTER!
WHAT--?
YOU'RE NOTHING!
UGGHHHKKK!


TEELA!
GRAAA'HNN!
NO! NOOO!

WHAT... JUST HAPPENED?
WHERE AM I?
YOU ARE SAFE, TEELA. YOU ARE BEYOND PAIN.
YOU ARE AT THE CENTER OF THE STAR SEED NOW.
THE SORCERESS?
....M-MOTHER?
ALL THOSE YEARS, I NEVER KNEW! I NEVER KNEW WHO YOU WERE!
YOU WERE MY MOTHER AND I NEVER KNEW!
HOW COULD YOU HAVE DENIED ME SO?
IT IS MY GREATEST REGRET, CHILD.
MY ROLE AS THE SORCERESS MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE A MOTHER TO YOU.
BUT I HAVE ALWAYS WATCHED OVER YOU.
I HAVE SEEN YOU GROW TO BECOME A FIERCE DEFENDER OF THE WORLD.
AND NOW IT IS TIME TO BECOME EVEN MORE.

THE MONSTER HSSSS IS WRONG. THE POWER AT THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSE IS NOT INDIFFERENT. IT DOES NOT LACK A CONSCIOUSNESS.
IT IS SIMPLY THAT THE MOTHER GODDESS IS BEYOND MORTAL COMPREHENSION, AND SHE HAS A PLAN FOR US ALL.
THE ROLE OF THE SORCERESS IS TO BE THE VOICE OF THIS POWER. TO BE ITS ORACLE. TO BE THE FACE OF A CARING UNIVERSE.
EACH RACE IN THE UNIVERSE SEES THE GODDESS IN ITS OWN IMAGE.
I WAS THE SORCERESS OF GRAYSKULL, THE ORACLE OF ZOAR, BUT THAT ERA DRAWS TO A CLOSE.
ETERNIA NEEDS A NEW SORCERESS FOR A NEW AGE.
A NEW FACE, A NEW VOICE, TO LEAD AND INSPIRE AN ANCIENT FORCE MIGHTY ENOUGH TO FREE ETERNIA FROM THE HORDE.
ARE YOU READY FOR THAT CHALLENGE, TEELA? ARE YOU READY TO TAKE MY PLACE?
ARE YOU READY TO PAY THE PRICE?
W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

KKKTTOOOOMMM
W-WHAT... WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I THINK THE TIDE IS TURNING.
GET UP AND FACE ME, LET'S FINISH THIS--
NO NEED. THIS FIGHT IS DONE.

I AM THE SORCERESS NOW.
I AM THE SORCERESS OF SERPOS.
I HAVE THE POWER.

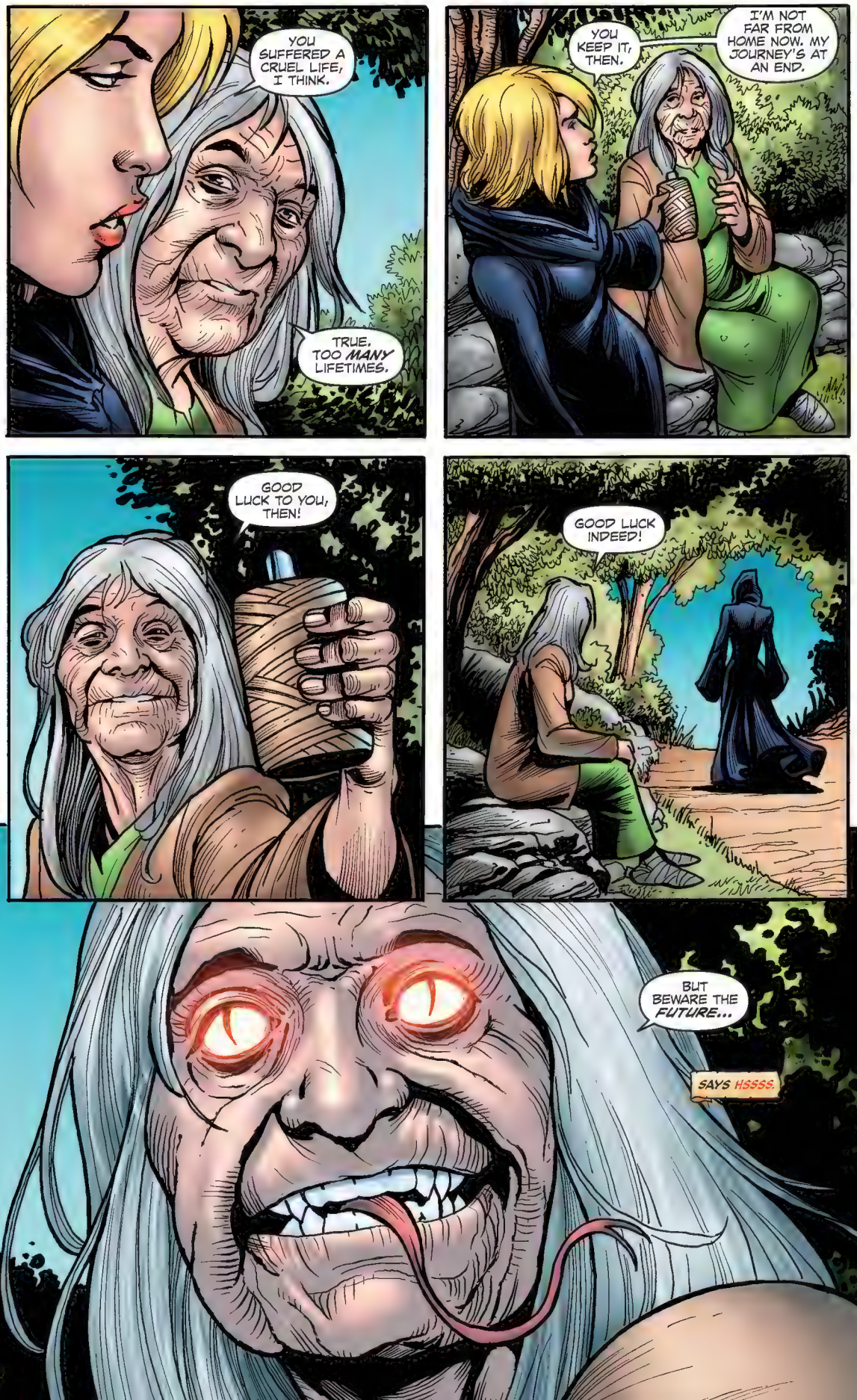
TEELA?
OH! OH, NO!
BOW TO ME, SNAKE MEN! BOW TO ME, MY PEOPLE!
MY STAFF! NO!
I WILL NEVER BOW TO THE GODDESS OR HER MOUTHPIECE!
I'LL DESTROY YOU!
I DON'T THINK SO.
UHNKK!

EEEEEAAAARRRHHHH...
TEELA?
YOU ARE TRANSFORMED!
THE GODDESS HAS ANSWERED OUR PRAYERS! ETERNIA HAS A SORCERESS AGAIN!
GRRRNNN-H!?
THE SNAKE MEN... WORSHIP YOU.
TEELA, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
I AM WHAT I HAVE BECOME, ADAM.
WE MAY YET WIN THIS WAR.
FIRST, LET'S LEAVE SUBTERNIA.
ZZZZAP!

ZZZZAP!
SNAKE MOUNTAIN, ON THE DARK HEMISPHERE OF ETERNIA...
MY ARMY IS READY, ADAM. AT YOUR COMMAND, A HOST OF SNAKE MEN. MORE AND MORE AWAKE EVERY SECOND.
WE WILL TURN THE FIGHT UPON HORDAK. WE WILL VANQUISH THE HORDE.
BUT FIRST, ETERNIA NEEDS A KING.
W-WHAT?
GRAYSKULL KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME!

LATER ON...
ADAM! WAIT! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MY KING?
NO...I WILL NOT WEAR THIS CROWN UNTIL OUR WORLD IS FREE FROM THE HORDE.
MY VISION WAS RIGHT, DEAR FRIEND... ZODAC WAS RIGHT.
WE HAVE NEW MIGHT, BUT THE COST HAS BEEN TERRIBLE.
MY FATHER IS DEAD, STRATOS.
HE MAY HAVE BEEN GONE FOR YEARS.
TEELA IS GONE TOO. SHE'S TRANSFIGURED. SHE IS NO LONGER THE GIRL I KNEW.
ETERNIA CAN STILL BE SAVED, BUT--
STRATOS, THE PRICE IS TOO GREAT...
... THE PRICE IS TOO GREAT...

AND MEANWHILE...
LADY! SPARE ME A DRINK.
OF COURSE. I HAVE WALKED A LONG, COLD ROAD. I HAVE KNOWN THE GENEROSITY OF STRANGERS.
...SAYS DESPARA.
MMMMM
YOU ARE MOST KIND. I APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY.


YOU SUFFERED A CRUEL LIFE, I THINK.
TRUE. TOO MANY LIFETIMES.
I'M NOT FAR FROM HOME NOW. MY JOURNEY'S AT AN END.
YOU KEEP IT, THEN.
GOOD LUCK TO YOU, THEN!
GOOD LUCK INDEED!
BUT BEWARE THE FUTURE...
SAYS HSSSS.

THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Prologue

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Pop Mhan

THE FINAL MOMENTS OF THE HORDE WAR.
ETERNIA
ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.
YOU WILL PERISH NOW, GRAYSKULL.
YOUR FORCES WILL BE SHATTERED BY THE HORDE.
YOUR POWER WILL BE MINE.
NO, HORDAK.
BEHOLD THIS BLADE, THE SWORD OF POWER, NEWLY FORGED IN THE VERY FIRES OF ETERNITY THAT YOU LONG TO CONTROL.
IT WAS MADE WITH ONE PURPOSE, MONSTER...
...TO DESTROY YOU!
NYEEARRGHH!

THUS HORDAK FELL, PIERCED BY KING GRAYSKULL'S MAGICAL BLADE.

THE SKIES OF ETERNIA CRACKED, A GRIM PORTAL YAWNED OPEN...

...AND HORDAK AND HIS HORDE WERE CAST, SCREAMING, INTO THE DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS.

THUS BEGAN THEIR BANISHMENT.

THUS GRAYSKULL CLAIMED HIS GREATEST VICTORY.

BEHOLD THE POWER OF ETERNITY!

ACROSS ETERNIA, THERE WAS REJOICING.
THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN DELIVERED FROM HORDAK'S EVIL.
CASTLE GRAYSKULL, THE VERY SEAT OF POWER, AND THE CITY WITHIN ITS BASTION WALLS, RANG WITH THE SOUNDS OF MERRYMAKING.
A MONTH OF FEASTING AND CELEBRATING WAS PLANNED.
LET US RAISE OUR CUPS AND TOAST!
THIS IS A VICTORY SEALED IN BLOOD! THE BLOOD OF OUR ENEMY!
LET US DRINK DEEP TO THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!
THUS PROCLAIMED THE WISE SAGE ADI, MOST TRUSTED OF ALL GRAYSKULL'S COUNCIL OF ELDERS.
THE NOBLE RACE OF THE GARS, FROM THE ISLAND OF ANWAT-GAR, PRODUCED THE FINEST CRAFTSMEN AND PHILOSOPHERS.
THE GARS WERE LOYAL FRIENDS OF THE KING, AND NONE WERE MORE LOYAL OR ERUDITE THAN ADI.

THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!
YOU HONOR ME WITH YOUR WORDS, OLD FRIEND.
THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN YOUR RACE AND MINE IS *FORTIFIED* BY THIS TRIUMPH.

YET... YOU DO NOT JOIN THE TOAST, MY KING?
I FEAR I HAVE DRAINED MY CUP ALREADY!
SARYN! CAN YOU FETCH MORE WINE FOR ME?
AT ONCE, MY KING!
YOU ARE A GOOD CHILD, SARYN. ALWAYS THERE WHEN I NEED YOU.
IT IS MY PLEASURE TO SERVE YOU, GREAT KING.
THE KING CHERISHED HIS HAND MAIDEN SARYN LIKE A DAUGHTER. IN TURN, SHE ADORED HIM.
SHE WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR HIM.
EVEN SAVE HIM FROM HIMSELF.
NEARBY SAT THE BEAUTIFUL QUEEN VEENA, HIGH PRIESTESS OF ZOAR WITH OTHER ORACLES FROM HER ORDER.
YOU SMILE AT THIS JOYOUS DAY, MY QUEEN, YET I SENSE DOUBT IN YOU.
DEAR KUDUK UNGOL, THOUGH WE ARE IN GLORY HERE, THE PROPHECY WEIGHS UPON MY HEART.
WHAT DOES THE KING THINK OF YOUR VISION, MY LADY?

OH, TEELA NA, I HAVE NOT YET FOUND THE MOMENT TO TELL HIM.
I DO NOT WISH TO SPOIL THIS HOUR, THOUGH I FEAR I MUST.
INDEED. OTHER MATTERS WERE HIDDEN AMIDS THE JUBILATION THAT DAY...
IS ALL PREPARED, GORTO?
AS YOU COMMANDED, LORD ADI.
WHEN YOU HEAR THE TEMPLE BELL SOUND. NOT A MOMENT BEFORE.
IT WILL BE DONE.
HEAR ME, ALL!
YOU PRAISE ME TODAY, AND I AM THANKFUL FOR IT.
BUT THIS IS WHAT WE TRULY CELEBRATE TODAY...
...THE SWORD OF POWER.
NEWLY FORGED FROM THE FIRES OF ETERNITY, IT IS MORE THAN A SWORD.
IT IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE MAGIC OF CREATION FASHIONED INTO A BLADE.

A WEAPON, TRUE, AND STILL FRESH FROM THE BLOOD OF OUR ENEMY.
BUT IT IS A WEAPON TO END WEAPONS. IT IS A PEACEMAKER.
FOR THIS BLADE, WE MUST REJOICE!
ITS POWER IS GREAT, MY LOVE, BUT YOU ARE THE ONE THAT THE GODDESS DEEMED WORTHY TO WIELD IT.
YOU ARE THE PEACEMAKER.
TO GRAYSKULL, THE PEACEMAKER! MAY ORDER REIGN FOREVERMORE!
LET THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL ABIDE!
HUSBAND, I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU FOR A MOMENT?
CAN IT NOT WAIT, MY LOVE?
LOATH AS I AM TO SOUR THIS CELEBRATION, I AM AFRAID IT CANNOT.

THE KING AND HIS WIFE WITHDREW FROM THE FEAST TO TALK...
SO, LOVE, SPEAK YOUR MIND. ZOAR HAS SPOKEN THROUGH YOU, HAS SHE NOT?
SHE HAS, BLESSED BE THE GODDESS.
A PROPHECY HAS COME TO ME.
AND?
A WARNING. TO YOU, HUSBAND. THERE WILL BE, IN THE FUTURE, A WAR BETWEEN TWO OF YOUR OWN BLOOD.
ONE WILL BRING DESTRUCTION. THE OTHER WILL FIGHT IT BACK.
OH, THE VERY WORDS PAIN ME!
BUT WHAT DO THEY MEAN, VEENA?
THEY ARE NOT CLEAR. I WILL BESEECH THE GODDESS AGAIN TO SHOW ME MORE THAT WE MAY BE PREPARED.

SARYN, CHILD?
ARE YOU READY?
HOW CAN I DO WHAT YOU ASK, LORD ADI?
HOW? IT IS THE WORST BETRAY--
HUSH! ONLY YOU CAN GET CLOSE ENOUGH. YOU ARE VITAL TO THIS.
SARYN, YOU MUST TRUST MY WISDOM.
YOU HAVE SEEN THE SWORD. IT SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN FORGED.
GRAYSKULL HAS TOO MUCH POWER FOR ANY MAN.
IT IS CORRUPTING HIM ALREADY.
ONE DAY HE, OR HIS HEIR, WILL LEAD ALL OF ETERNIA TO EVERLASTING DAMNATION.
BUT--
THE QUEEN HAS BEEN GIVEN A PROPHECY. TWO HEIRS OF GRAYSKULL, FIGHTING OVER THE SWORD AND THE POWER IN THIS CASTLE.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND? THE BLOODLINE OF GRAYSKULL WILL TEAR ETERNIA APART!
EVEN THE QUEEN HAS FORESEEN THIS!
YET I CAN'T JUST--
YOU HAVE MANY SISTERS, SARYN, ALL MOTHERS TO MANY CHILDREN.
BUT YOU ARE CHILDLESS.
I KNOW I WILL NEVER BEAR A CHILD. WHY DO YOU REMIND ME OF THIS PAIN?

BECAUSE IT IS NOT TRUE, SARYN. THE QUEEN HAS SEEN VISIONS WHICH SHE AND THE KING HAVE KEPT FROM YOU.
YOU *WILL* BE A MOTHER, THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE IN THE UNIVERSE. *YOU* WILL BEAR THE *SAVIOR* WHO WILL FIGHT *BACK* THE DESTRUCTION WROUGHT BY GRAYSKULL'S MADNESS.
FOR *THAT* TO HAPPEN, WE MUST HAVE GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD. *TONIGHT.*
NOW, ARE YOU WITH US?
ETERNITY FORGIVE ME... *YES.*

LONG INTO THE NIGHT, THE FEASTING CONTINUED. MUSIC, LAUGHTER AND CAROUSING SOUNDED THROUGH THE CITY AND CASTLE ALIKE.
BUT AT LAST, BELLIES FULL OF WINE AND RICH FOOD DREW MOST TO THEIR BEDS.
K-TANG! K-TANG!
THEY WOULD SLEEP, AND WAKE REFRESHED TO START THE SECOND DAY OF CELEBRATION.
SO IT BEGINS.
AND AT THAT HOUR, AS QUIET FINALLY FELL...
KRASSH!
WHAT IS THIS? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SLAY THEM. ALL OF THEM.

AAAIIEEEE!
THE GARS! THEY HAVE TURNED ON U-
ARRRRGGH!
BURN IT DOWN.
NO! GET AWAY FROM US!
AGGHHHHKKK!

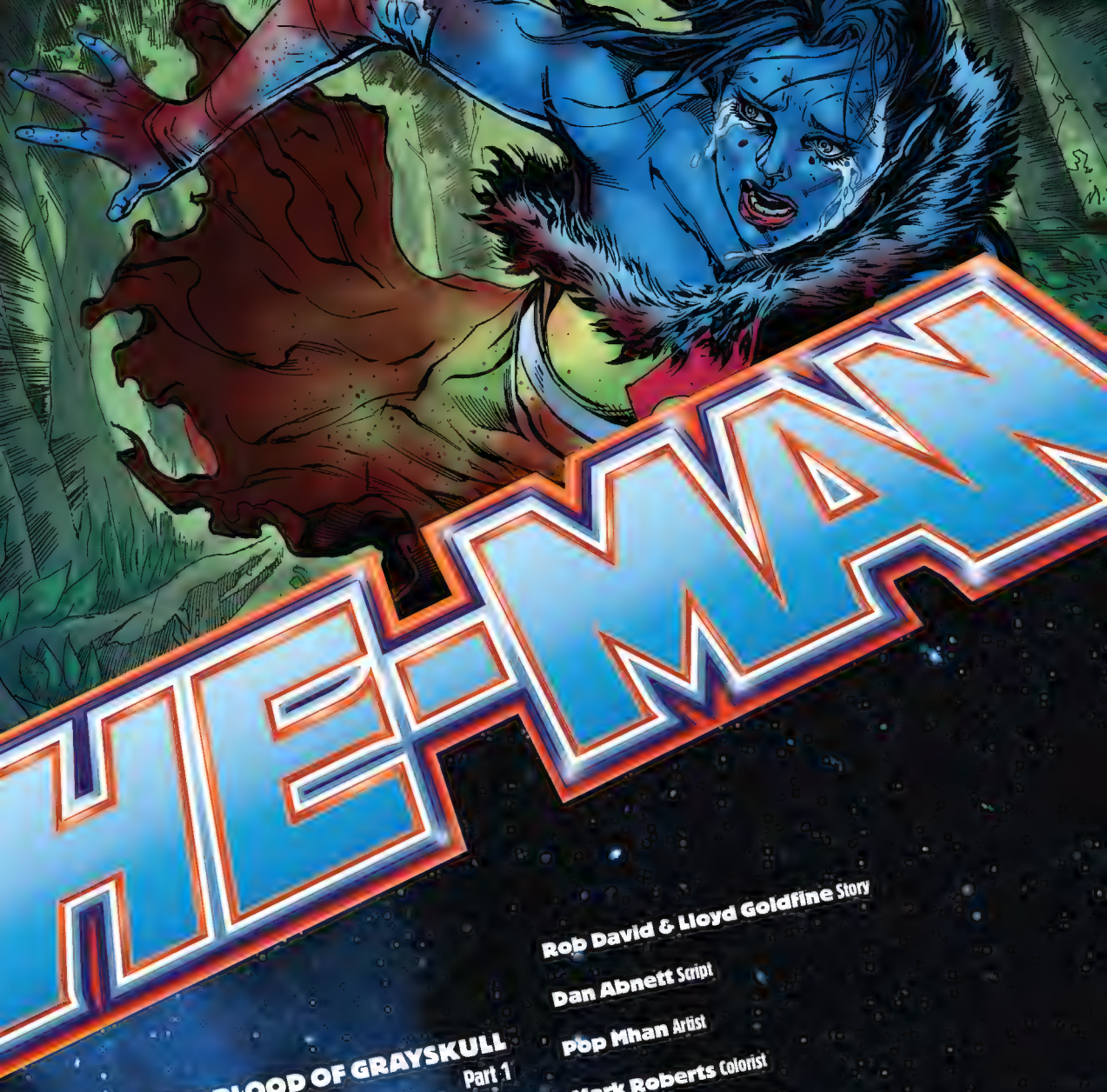
WHAT TREACHERY IS *THIS?*
ADI? I CANNOT *BELIEVE...*
ADI, IS THIS... A *COUP?*
MY DEAR QUEEN, *THIS* IS PEACEMAKING AT ITS MOST *PRECISE.*
THIS IS THE PRESERVATION OF THE *FUTURE.*
THIS IS AN *END* TO THE *CURSE OF GRAYSKULL!*
NO! *NOOOOO!*
UNHAND THE QUEEN!
NO! RUN, TEELA NA! *SAVE YOURSELF!*
RUN...
...AND *REMEMBER* WHAT YOU SAW THIS NIGHT.
NO... *NO...*

A- ANOTHER DRINK, MY KING?
THANK YOU, SARYN.
YOU SEEM LOST IN *REVERIE*, MY LORD.
MY THOUGHTS ARE *TROUBLED*, GIRL, I--
WHAT IS *THAT*? I... I SEE *FLAMES* OUTSIDE!

ARE WE ATTACKED? HAS HORDAK RETURNED?
BY THE POWER, I WILL BURY THE SWORD IN HIS HEART AGAIN IF I HAVE TO AND...
...A-AND...
NH-HH!
I... CAN-NOT... MOVE...
I AM SO SORRY.

S-SARYN... HAVE Y-YOU... DRUGGED ME..?
THE BLADE WAS READY. IT WAS A CURSED THING, STRONG ENOUGH TO PIERCE EVEN GRAYSKULL'S ENHANCED SKIN.
CLOSE YOUR EYES. DO NOT LOOK AT ME.
S-SARYN... Y-YOU ARE L-LIKE A D-DAUGHTER TO M--
I KNOW. SO CLOSE YOUR EYES.

ETERNIA
THE DARKEST NIGHT OF ALL.
ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.



HE-MAN

THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Part 1

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ken Lashley

ANWAT-GAR, ISLAND HOME OF THE GAR PEOPLE.
ETERNIA
ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.
A THOUSAND YEARS, BUT THE FEAR DOES NOT DIMINISH.
IT WILL NEVER GO AWAY.
SHE IS RUNNING. ALL THE DEVILS AND DEMONS OF ETERNIA PURSUE HER.
ALL THAT IS MONSTROUS, ALL THAT IS FEARSOME OF ASPECT. ALL THAT IS HORRIBLE.
A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, HER NAME WAS SARYN.

CURSED NAME. CURSED BLOOD.
OF ALL THE TREACHEROUS GAR, THE MOST CURSED OF ALL.
PLEASE... P-PLEASE...
THE DEMONS AND THE DEVILS ARE IN HER HEAD.
SHE TELLS HERSELF THAT.
SARYN KEEPS TELLING HERSELF THAT.
THEY ARE NOT REAL DEMONS OF THE AIR AND SMOKE.
THEY ARE HER GUILT, MANIFESTED. THEY ARE HER SHAME.
GODS HELP ME...
BUT IF THEY'RE IN HER HEAD, WHOSE BLOOD SOAKS HER?
AND WHAT CAN SHE SEE IN THE SHADOWS BEHIND HER...
NO!

...IF THERE'S NOTHING THERE?
SSSSSARYN?
Nooooooooo!
SARYN SCREAMS, AND THE SCREAM, LIKE THE FEAR, LASTS A THOUSAND YEARS.

ONE THOUSAND YEARS LATER.
ADORA AWAKES.
NNYAAAAARRRH!!
COVERED IN BLOOD! I WAS C--
--COVERED IN BLOOD. SOMEONE WAS COVERED IN BLOOD.
SHE LIVES ON THE RUN. HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THALU, IT'S EASY TO LIE LOW.
NO ONE COMES TO THIS WILDERNESS.
THE LONELINESS SUITS HER, AND IF THE LONELINESS IS DISTURBED, SHE PACKS UP AND MOVES AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.
THE ONLY THING SHE CAN'T OUTRUN ARE THE ANCIENT DREAMS.
TIME TO GO.

THE MAP IS HER ONLY FOCUS. HER ONLY TRUTH.
IT IS AN OLD THING, AND SHE HAS CONSULTED IT SO MANY TIMES IT IS CRUMBLING AND FALLING APART.
ADORA DOESN'T KNOW IF THE MAP SHOWS THE WAY TO HER REDEMPTION OR HER DOOM.
ALL SHE KNOWS IS THAT IT SHOWS THE WAY TO ANWAT-GAR.
FORBIDDEN ANWAT-GAR.
DOOM, I THINK.
I DESERVE NO LESS.
DAMN YOU, DESPARA!
DAMN YOU, ADORA.
THERE'S SOMETHING THERE. SOMETHING HAS INTRUDED ON HER LONELINESS.
SHOW YOURSELF!
IT'S THE DEMON OF THE AIR AND SMOKE! THE FEAR! THE THING IN THE TREES! IT'S--

--YOU?

A FINE GREETING, I MUST SAY.
HE-MAN.
"HE-MAN" IS A TITLE. ONE I DON'T TAKE LIGHTLY.
BUT I'D PREFER IF YOU CALL ME ADAM.
YOU BIG OLD KITTEN, YOU!
YOU TOLD HIM WHERE I WAS, DIDN'T YOU?
BATTLE CAT IS FOND OF YOU. HE DOESN'T BEFRIEND PEOPLE EASILY.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE A WAY WITH ANIMALS.
SISTER.
GRRRRRRRRR!
WHY ARE YOU HERE? I MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT I WISHED TO BE LEFT ALONE.
YEAH, ABOUT THAT. REMEMBER, MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE YOU BELONG IN A PRISON CELL FOR YOUR CRIMES AGAINST ETERNIA.
FORTUNATELY, I'M NOT ONE OF THEM.
I RESPECT YOUR PRIVACY, ADORA. BUT... I COME WITH GRAVE NEWS.
ADORA... THE KING IS DEAD. OUR FATHER IS DEAD.

I...I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.
I CAN'T GRIEVE FOR A FATHER I NEVER KNEW.
OUR LOSS.
HOW DID HE DIE?
TOO LONG, TOO STRANGE, AND TOO PAINFUL TO TELL FOR NOW.
HE WAS SLAIN BY AN ANCIENT EVIL.
SO... YOU'RE KING NOW?
NO. I WILL NOT TAKE THE CROWN UNTIL ETERNIA IS FREE OF THE HORDE. THIS IS MY OATH.
YOU'RE BREAKING CAMP.
LET'S WALK A WHILE TOGETHER.

THE FORTUNES OF THE REBELLION AGAINST HORDAK HAVE CHANGED, ADORA.
I'VE ORDERED ALL SURVIVING AND FREE MASTERS TO REGROUP.
WE HAVE A NEW FORTRESS TO STRIKE FROM, HIDDEN IN THE DARK HEMISPHERE.
AND A NEW ARMY. OF SNAKE MEN.
HMPH. NEVER HEARD OF 'EM.
NEITHER HAD I...BUT IT SEEMS THE ANCIENT PAST IS REAWAKENING AND RUSHING UP ALL AROUND US.
THINGS WE ONCE THOUGHT OF AS DREAMS ARE NOW REAL AGAIN.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA...
ADORA...OUR FATHER IS *GONE*, AND OUR MOTHER *MAROONED* OFF-WORLD.
ETERNIA HAS LOST ITS KING *AND* ITS QUEEN.
THE DUTY FALLS TO ME TO *LEAD* ETERNIA AND HER PEOPLE OUT OF THE DARKNESS.
ME... AND MY *SISTER.*
NO...

HE-MAN... ADAM, I HAVE VOWED TO FIGHT HORDAK UNTIL MY DYING BREATH--BUT ON MY TERMS. MY CAUSE.
YOU WERE WRONG TO COME HERE! I HAVE NO PLACE IN YOUR WAR!
AS DESPARA, I WAS THE FACE OF THE CONQUEROR, ADAM, THE VERY FACE!
I DESTROYED GRAYSKULL'S LEGACY!
THE PEOPLE WILL NEVER FORGIVE ME. I DOUBT THEY SHOULD.
YOU'RE AS MUCH A VICTIM OF HORDAK AS WE ALL ARE. WHAT YOU DID WAS NOT YOUR FAULT.
AND WHAT ABOUT THE PROPHECY, ADAM?
THE PROPHECY?
AN HEIR TO GRAYSKULL, WORTHY TO WIELD THE POWER AND THE SWORD?
IT TOLD OF ONE OF US, NOT BOTH.
THE SORCERESS SACRIFICED ME TO HORDAK TO SAVE YOU, ADAM, SO THAT ONE DAY YOU MIGHT BECOME HE-MAN.
HOW DO YOU THINK I FEEL ABOUT THAT?
ABANDONED. UNLOVED...BY THE SORCERESS, BY YOUR FAMILY, BY GRAYSKULL. I UNDERSTAND.
THAT'S WHY I WANTED YOU TO HAVE THIS...

A LOCKET THAT BELONGED TO OUR MOTHER, MARLENA. HER PICTURE IS INSIDE.
OH...
IT IS THE ONLY THING OF HERS THAT I HAVE LEFT.
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT FORTIFY YOU IN YOUR EXILE. I WANT YOU TO HAVE IT.
ADORA, YOU ARE MY SISTER. MY TWIN.
WE ARE BOUND BY BLOOD.
OUR PARENTS ARE GONE. YOU ARE ALL I HAVE LEFT.
ADAM...
DO NOT ASK THIS OF ME!

ADORA... STOP. WE KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING.
WE?
ME AND TEELA.
TEELA HAS ASCENDED. SHE IS THE NEW SORCERESS.
GREAT GODS! THERE GOES THE WAR!
MAYBE. BUT TEELA KNOWS. SHE KNOWS YOUR DREAMS.
YOU'RE GOING TO ANWAT-GAR TO CONFRONT THEM.
BUT ANWAT-GAR IS FORBIDDEN. IT HAS BEEN FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.
THE GAR HAVE BEEN PARIAH SINCE THEIR KIND MURDERED GRAYSKULL IN THE COUP.
HOWEVER, I'M NOT HERE TO STOP YOU.

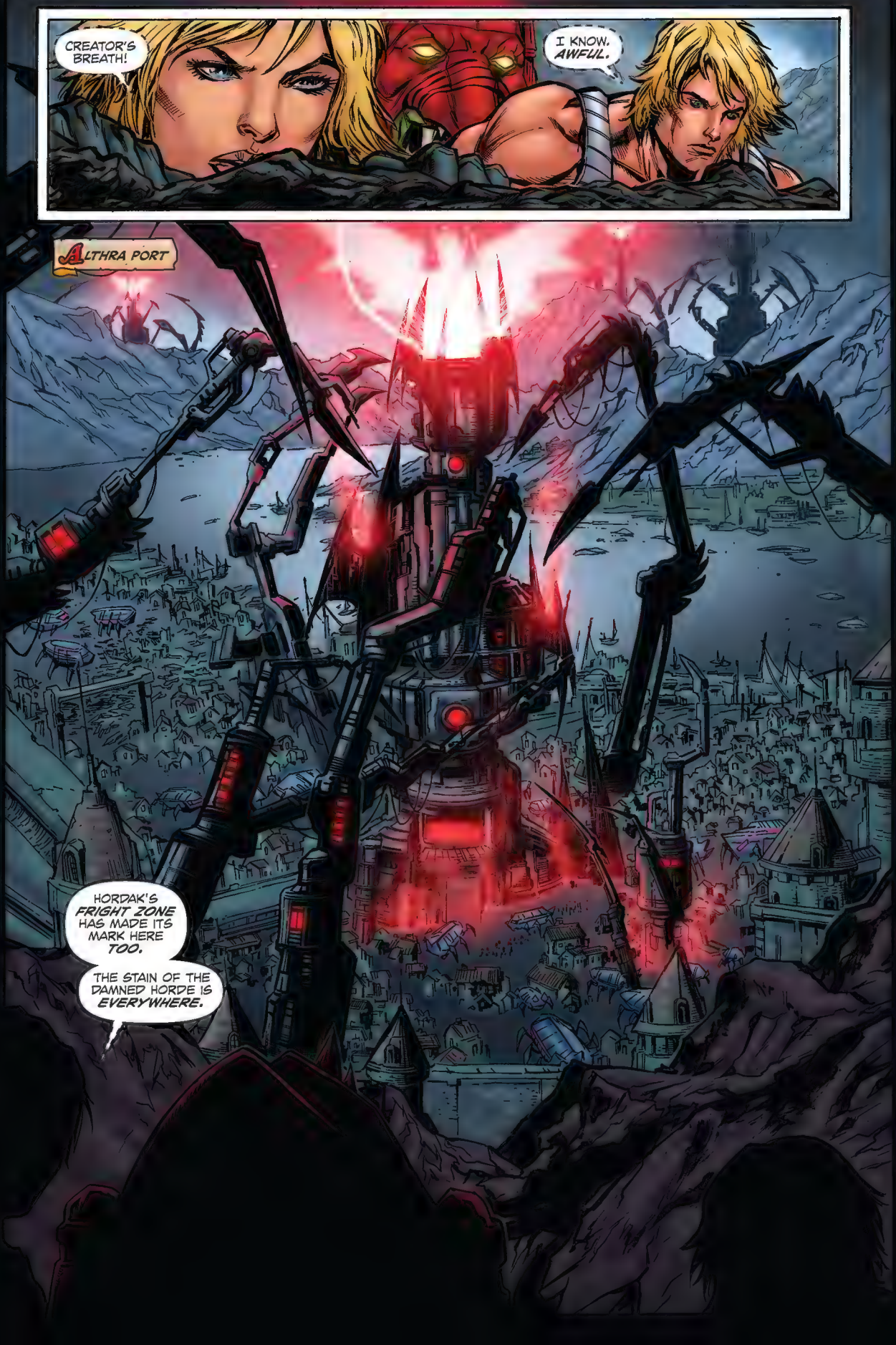
I'M COMING WITH YOU. TO KEEP YOU SAFE.
THE SORCERESS BELIEVES YOU WILL FIND YOUR ANSWERS THERE.
OH, NO. NO. NO!
I WALK THIS PATH ALONE.
JUST LISTEN TO HER MESSAGE.
ADORA, YOU ONCE TOLD ME I WAS THE ONLY THING YOU COULD COUNT ON AS REAL IN YOUR LIFE.
SO, TRUST ME NOW.
MAKE THE JOURNEY WITH ADAM.
LET HIM KEEP YOU SAFE.
WE LOVE YOU, ADORA. LET US DO THIS FOR YOU.
TAKE THE GIFT IN THE CASKET TO GUARD YOU ON THIS VENTURE.
T-TEELA...

SHE'S GONE.
HER GIFT REMAINS.
A BLADE!
A FINE AND ANCIENT ONE.
IT'S SO SWEETLY BALANCED!
A MASTERPIECE WEAPON!
GLAD YOU LIKE IT.
SO..?
I APPRECIATE THE COMPANY, YOU KNOW?
BUT I DON'T DESERVE IT.
I HAVE DEMONS TO BANISH.
PERHAPS I CAN HELP WITH THAT.
HOW?
FAMILY IS A STRENGTH THAT DEMONS FEAR.

ADORA! TO YOUR LEFT!
SEEN HIM!
GLORY, THIS BLADE SINGS!

SING ME THE SONG LATER! DEAL WITH THIS HORDE PATROL!
GRROOWLLLL!
I THINK WE'RE DONE.

COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT *WITHOUT* YOU.
GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
THAT'S THE *THIRD* HORDE WAR PARTY WE'VE ENCOUNTERED.
THIS *WHOLE REGION* IS HORDE-OCCUPIED.
WE CAN'T RISK BEING SEEN, CAPTURED OR EVEN *DETECTED.*
WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?
WE COULD GO *BY SEA.*
WE GET TO *ALTHRA PORT* AND STEAL A BOAT.
BUT THE PORT IS HORDE-CONTROLLED *TOO.*
WELL, I NEVER SAID IT WOULD BE *EASY.*


CREATOR'S BREATH!
I KNOW. AWFUL.
ALTHRA PORT
HORDAK'S FRIGHT ZONE HAS MADE ITS MARK HERE TOO.
THE STAIN OF THE DAMNED HORDE IS EVERYWHERE.

"THE HORDE IS HERE IN FORCE."
"AND ETERNIANS SUFFER, ENSLAVED. WHAT ARE THEY DOING WITH THEM?"
"I HATE TO IMAGINE."
WE HAVE TO GET THROUGH THAT HELL HOLE AND FIND A BOAT.
HEY, I'M GAME IF YOU ARE.
ADAM AND ADORA, CHILDREN OF RANDOR, OF THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL, SIDE BY SIDE, WITH THE MIGHTY BATTLE CAT AT THEIR HEELS...

TARGET: ADORA/DESPARA.
ACQUIRED.
WHAT'S STOPPING US?
TARGET: HE-MAN.
ACQUIRED.
TARGET: BATTLE CAT.
ACQUIRED.

HE-MAN

THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Part 2

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

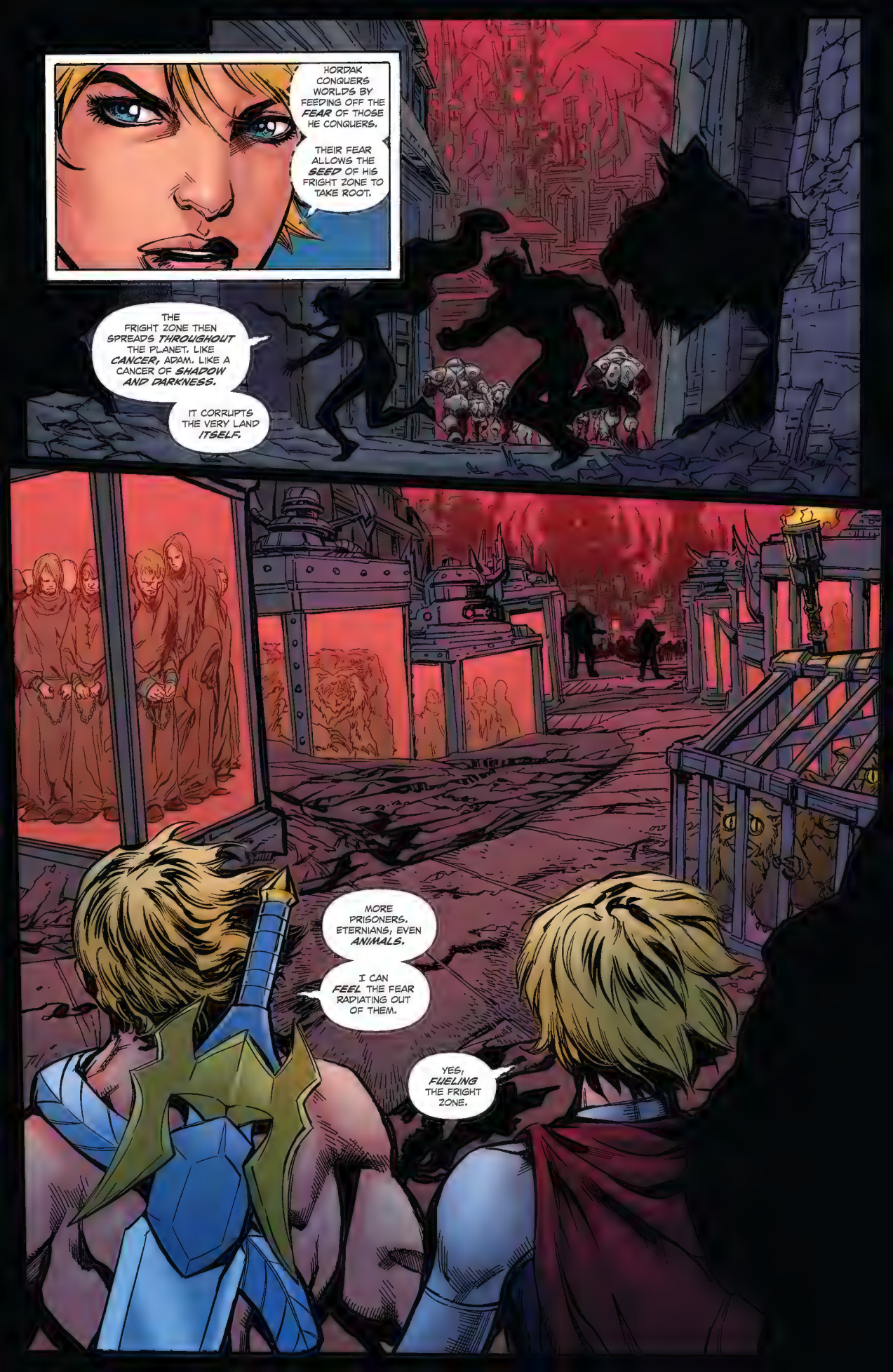
Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ariel Olivetti

HE-MAN AND HIS ESTRANGED SISTER ADORA WAIT UNTIL NIGHTFALL.
THEN THEY SLIP INTO ALTHRA PORT.
THEY NEED A BOAT. A BOAT TO GET THEM TO THE FORBIDDEN ISLAND OF ANWAT-GAR.
ALTHRA PORT IS THE ONLY POSSIBILITY.
BUT ALTHRA PORT IS HORDE TERRITORY.
IT HAS BECOME PART OF HORDAK'S FRIGHT ZONE.
KRRRK
CHNTCHH

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE FRIGHT ZONE DOES.
I DO.

WHAT? DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT, ADAM.
OF COURSE I KNOW! HORDAK RAISED ME AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER!
HE TRAINED ME TO BE HIS CHIEF KILLER. HIS FORCE CAPTAIN.
HIS... "DESPARA."
I SAW HORDAK'S MALIGN SKILLS AT CLOSE HAND..
I WAS THE BLADE HE USED TO STAB ETHERIA'S HEART.
THE MEMORY SHAMES ME...
BUT THE KNOWLEDGE REMAINS.
HORDAK IS DOING TO ETERNIA WHAT HE DID TO ETHERIA.
HE'S CONSUMING IT.
"CONSUMING"? HOW?


HORDAK CONQUERS WORLDS BY FEEDING OFF THE FEAR OF THOSE HE CONQUERS.
THEIR FEAR ALLOWS THE SEED OF HIS FRIGHT ZONE TO TAKE ROOT.
THE FRIGHT ZONE THEN SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE PLANET. LIKE CANCER, ADAM. LIKE A CANCER OF SHADOW AND DARKNESS.
IT CORRUPTS THE VERY LAND ITSELF.
MORE PRISONERS. ETERNIANS, EVEN ANIMALS.
I CAN FEEL THE FEAR RADIATING OUT OF THEM.
YES, FUELING THE FRIGHT ZONE.

ALL THESE POOR PEOPLE, THESE *INNOCENT* CREATURES...
WE SHOULD FREE THEM.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'LL BLOW OUR COVER?
JUST A THOUGHT.
OH, YOU POOR THING.
ADAM, WE HAVE TO STAY *FOCUSED*. PICK OUR BATTLES. YOU *KNOW* WHAT TEELA SAID.
YES. THE TRUTHS WE CAN FIND ON ANWAT-GAR MIGHT *WIN* THE WHOLE WAR.
IT'S JUST HARD... TO WITNESS THIS HORROR AND...DO *NOTHING*.
GRRRRRLLL

TOO CLOSE.
YOU AND I JUST AREN'T BUILT FOR STEALTH, CAT.
YOU'RE DOING FINE, ADAM, WE CAN DO THIS.
WHAT DOES HE DO WITH THE PRISONERS?
ADORA? WHAT DOES HORDAK DO WITH THE PRISONERS?
YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

I WOULDN'T BE ASKING IF I DIDN'T.
THE HORDE PLACES THEM IN THE FRIGHT ZONE CHAMBERS. THEN...
THEN HORDAK FEASTS ON THEIR SOULS. HE ABSORBS THEM INTO HIMSELF AND IT INCREASES HIS POWER.
I WISH YOU DIDN'T SOUND LIKE YOU WERE IN AWE OF HIM.
WE SHOULD ALL BE IN AWE OF HIM.
HE IS INEVITABLE... LIKE A ....AN ANCIENT GOD.
SOME SAY LORD HORDAK IS AS OLD AS CREATION. A FORCE OF NATURE. HE IS--
WHAT?
HE IS AN AGENT OF ENDINGS. OF ENTROPY. ALL THINGS MUST END, ADAM.
HORDAK HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE NATURAL COURSE OF THE COSMOS. UGLY THOUGH IT IS.
ADAM?
ADAM?
GNNNRRR!

ALL THESE ETERNIANS WILL *DIE*, THEN? IN THE FRIGHT ZONE CHAMBERS? THEIR SOULS *EATEN*?
YES, BUT--
THIS WON'T STAND. I WON'T ALLOW IT.
ADAM! LOWER YOUR VOICE!
I DON'T CARE. *THIS WILL NOT STAND.*
GET READY TO FREE THE PRISONERS.
ADAM! THEY'LL DETECT US AND--
OH, THEY'LL DO MORE THAN JUST "DETECT" US...
SHIELD YOUR EYES.
BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!

I HAVE THE POWER!
OH.
MY.
GOD.
THE NIGHT SHATTERS. HE-MAN DRAWS THE POWER OF ETERNITY DOWN.

HE CALLS IT DOWN LIKE LIGHTNING TO RAIN JUDGMENT UPON THE HORDE.
ADORA HAS NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT. SHE KNEW HER BROTHER WAS POWERFUL, BUT THIS...

HE IS LIKE A MAJESTIC GOD. A SAVIOR.

FREE THE PRISONERS!
ADORA SNAPS OUT OF HER SHOCK. SHE HURRIES TO OBEY.
SHE VIVIDLY SEES THE TWIN PATHS OF HER LIFE BEFORE HER. THE DARKNESS OF THE FRIGHT ZONE.
THE BLINDING FURY OF THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL.
ONE APPEALS VERY MUCH MORE THAN THE OTHER.
QUICK! RUN NOW! RUN!
ARE WE FREE?
BUT THE HORDE!
RUN, I SAID! FAST!

HURRY! GO!
YOU TOO, PRETTY ONE!
YOU'RE FREE NOW! TAKE TO THE SWIFT WINDS AND GET AWAY!
GO, I SAID!

ETERNIANS! YOU'RE FREE!
FLEE INTO THE HILLS! BATTLE CAT WILL LEAD YOU TO SNAKE MOUNTAIN.
YOU'LL FIND SAFETY THERE!
GMMMRRR!
C'MON, CAT. I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
GET OUR PEOPLE HOME, BRAVE ONE.

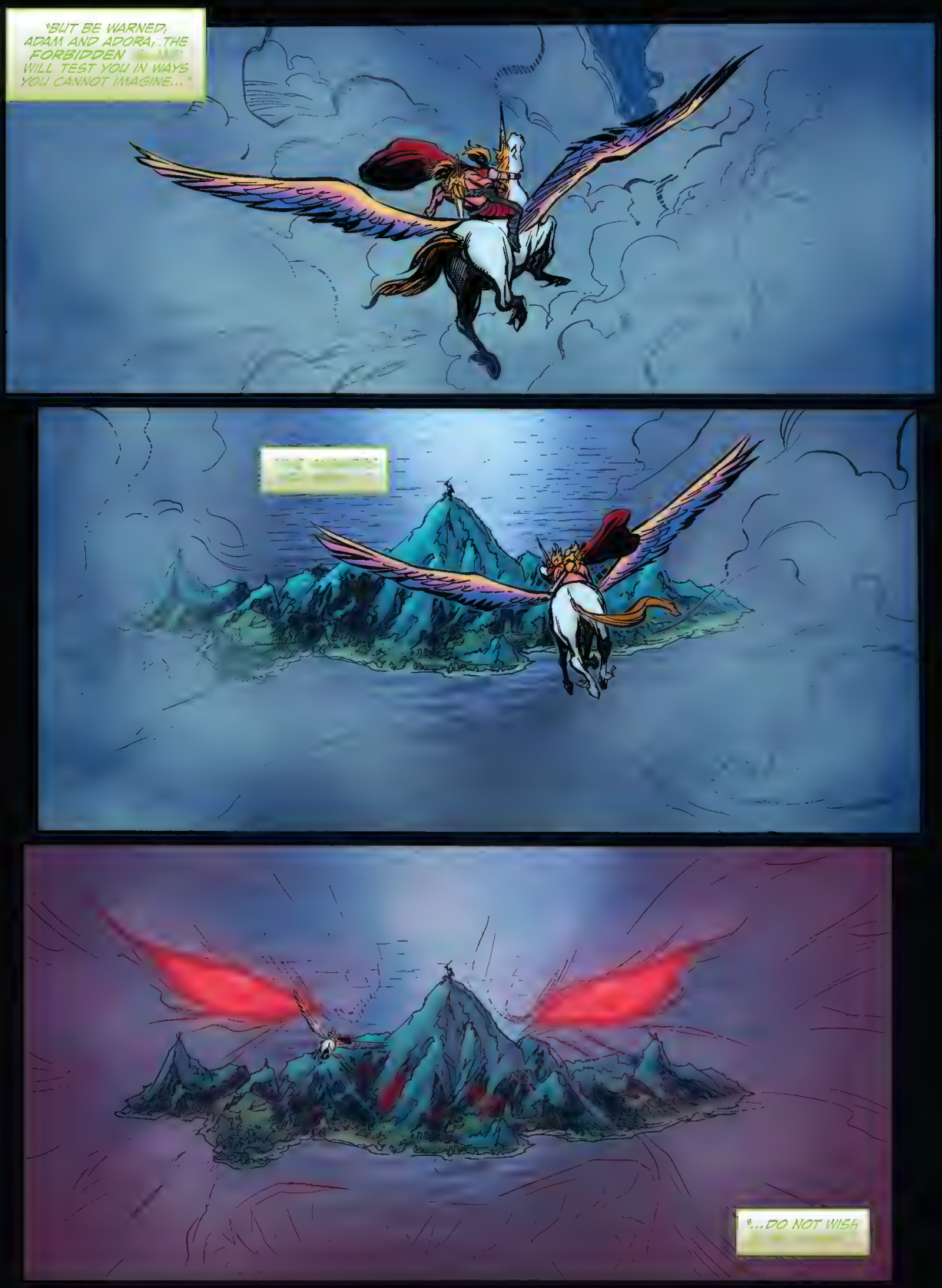
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!
DON'T CHEER ME! GO! GET YOURSELVES TO SAFETY! TURN YOUR FEAR TO RAGE! TO A THIRST FOR JUSTICE!
SOON, WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO HORDAK!
GRROWWLLL
THAT WAS...A HELL OF A THING.
IT WAS... NECESSARY.
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T STICK TO THE PLAN, ADORA.
WE'LL CONTINUE ON TO ANWAT-GAR.
I JUST COULDN'T LEAVE THEM TO...
ADAM...
I UNDERSTAND.

LET'S FIND A BOAT AND--
ADAM, YOUR SWORD. IT'S GLOWING!
A WARNING.
DO YOU FEEL THAT?
YES.
SHRR RACK
UGGHH!!
AGHHH!!
THERE GOES OUR ESCAPE PLAN!
I TOLD YOU! HORDAK'S CORRUPTION IS IN THE VERY LAND ITSELF!
ALTHRA PORT IS TRYING TO KILL US! ETERNIA IS TRYING TO KILL US!

THE FRIGHT ZONE IS FIGHTING BACK!
AND IN THESE FINAL MOMENTS, ADORA CAN HEAR THE WORDS BURNED INTO THE SOULS OF EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD OF ETHERIA.
"THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM LORD HORDAK."
"THERE IS NO ESCAPE."
"THERE IS NO---"
WAIT! ADORA, LOOK!

BUT THIS IS NOT ETHERIA.
YOU CAME BACK! YOU CAME BACK FOR ME!
YOU CERTAINLY HAVE A WAY WITH ANIMALS.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? IS IT A STORM?
NO...
...THE SORCERESS!
TEELA!
FLY ON, MY FRIENDS. FLY TRUE.
ANWAT-GAR AWAITS YOU.


"BUT BE WARNED, ADAM AND ADORA, THE FORBIDDEN WILL TEST YOU IN WAYS YOU CANNOT IMAGINE..."
"...DO NOT WISH

HE-MAN

THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Part 3

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Ken Lashley

EASY, SWIFTWIND! EASY NOW!
HE'S SPOOKED, HE-MAN.
HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE.
THE ISLAND OF ANWAT-GAR IS A HAUNTED PLACE.
THERE'S A PRESENCE HERE. SOMETHING... EVIL.

LOOK THERE. THE SHORE LINE.
TRACES OF THE FRIGHT ZONE.
SO HORDAK'S SHADOW IS BEGINNING TO ENCROACH HERE AS WELL.
ANWAT-GAR WILL SOON FALL TO THE FRIGHT ZONE CORRUPTION TOO.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I FEEL.
IT'S SOMETHING ELSE.
EASY, SWIFTWIND!
YOU'VE NAMED HIM, I SEE?
HE SAVED US. HE DESERVES A NAME.
LOOK, UP AHEAD. CRUMBLING TEMPLES AND MONUMENTS.

THIS IS TRAGIC. IN HIS INVASION BRIEFINGS, LORD HORDAK SAID THAT THE GAR CIVILIZATION WAS PROUD AND MIGHTY.
NOW IT IS... FALLEN.
A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, IT WAS GAR THAT MURDERED GRAYSKULL.
AFTER THE COUP, THE GAR SUFFERED. RESISTANCE AGAINST THEM GREW AND THE GAR WERE OSTRACIZED. THE ISLAND WAS DECLARED FORBIDDEN.
THE ISLAND HAS BEEN CUT OFF FROM THE MAINLAND - AND THE RULE AND LIGHT OF GRAYSKULL - FOR A MILLENNIUM.
SHOULD AN ENTIRE PEOPLE SUFFER FOR THE ACTIONS OF A FEW INDIVIDUALS?
NO. IT'S WRONG.

SYMPATHY FROM THE BLOODLINE OF GRAYSKULL. *NOT* WHAT WE EXPECTED.
HUH!
BY THE *GODDESS!* GAR... *IN THE SHADOWS ALL AROUND US!*
WE HAVE BEEN AROUND YOU SINCE YOU *ARRIVED.*
WE *LIVE* IN THE SHADOWS. NO ONE *EVER* LOOKS IN THE SHADOWS.

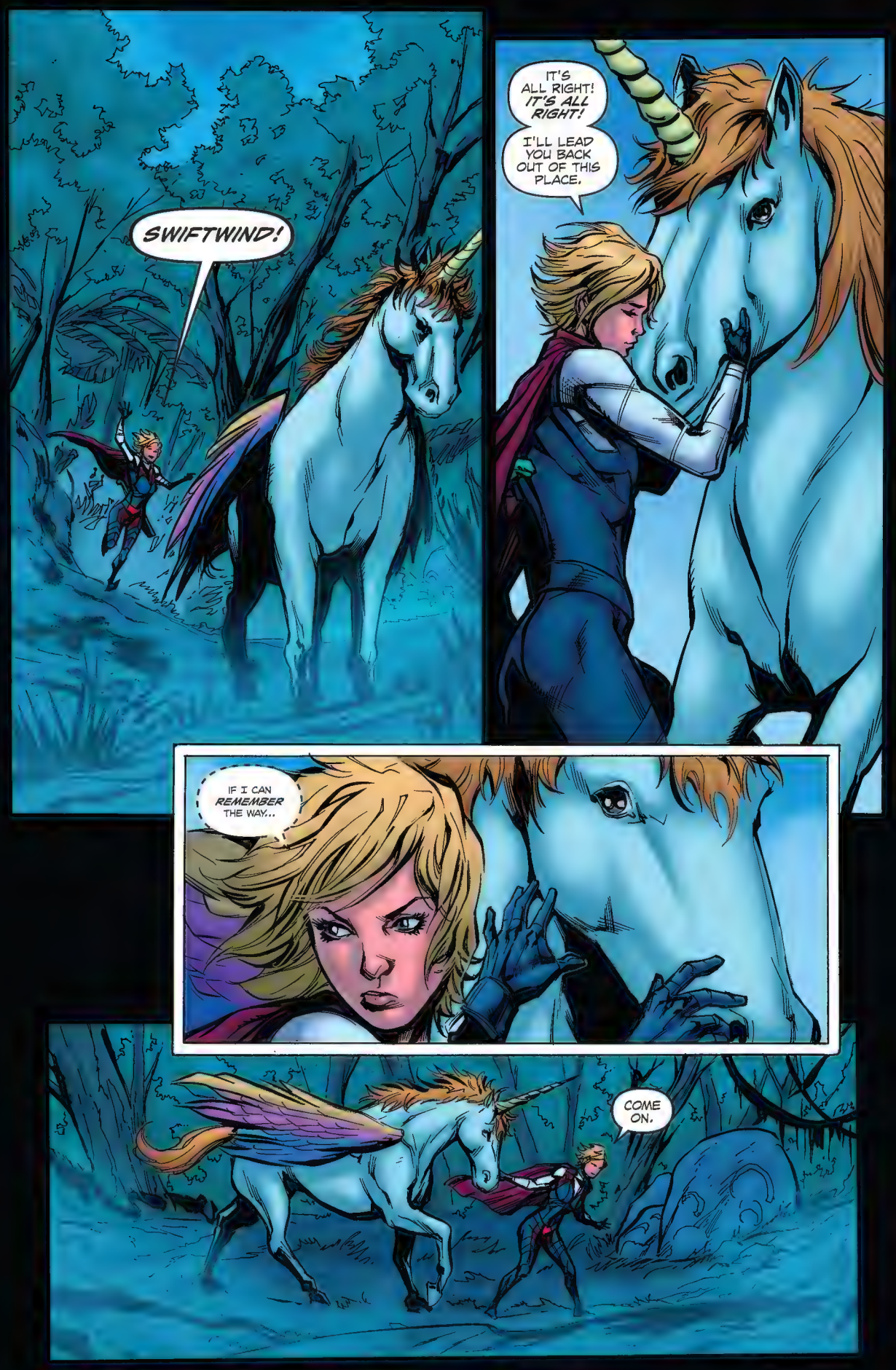
SWIFTWIND!
SWIFTWIND!
HE-MAN, HE'S BOLTED!
SHE SHOULD NOT GO INTO THE WOODS.
WHY NOT?
SWIFTWIND! SWIFTWIND, COME BACK!
I WON'T BE LONG!
GO FETCH HIM, ADORA, AND BRING HIM BACK.
I'LL TALK TO THE GAR.
BECAUSE OF THE WITCH.
THE WITCH?
SHE HAUNTS US. SHE LIVES IN THE WOODS.
SHE EATS CHILDREN.
ENTER THE WOODS, AND YOU LOSE YOURSELF TO HER. YOU LOSE YOUR MIND TO HER.

YOUR WARNING COMES A LITTLE LATE.
I'M GOING AFTER HER.
NO. I WILL SEND WARRIORS TO FIND HER. WE KNOW THE PATHS BETTER.
I WOULD MUCH RATHER--
PLEASE. I DO NOT WANT TO RISK YOU GETTING LOST TOO.
MY WARRIORS WILL FIND HER AND BRING HER BACK SAFE. THIS I PROMISE YOU.
AN HOUR, THEN. IF SHE HASN'T BEEN FOUND, I'LL GO.
VERY WELL.
LET ME OFFER YOU REFRESHMENT. LET US TALK.
THIS IS A GREAT DAY FOR US, ETERNIAN.
OUR FIRST CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE IN A THOUSAND YEARS.
DO YOU HAVE A NAME?

NONE OF US HAVE NAMES. WE ARE GHOSTS. THE GAR ARE A GHOST PEOPLE.
BUT PERHAPS WE WILL HAVE NAMES AGAIN ONE DAY. SOON.
YOU HAVE BROKEN THE TABOO AND COME TO US.
NOT JUST AS AN OUTSIDER, BUT AS A SON OF GRAYSKULL.
HAVE YOU COME HERE FOR REVENGE?
NO.
WE HOPED NOT.
OUR WORLD IS IN DANGER. A TRUSTED FRIEND HAS SAID THAT SOME SALVATION CAN BE FOUND HERE ON YOUR ISLAND.
THAT IS WHY WE CAME.
BUT I BELIEVE IT IS TIME TO OVERTURN THE LAW FORBIDDING CONTACT WITH YOU.
THE GAR HAVE SUFFERED ENOUGH. IT IS NOT RIGHT THAT THE SINS OF THE FATHER FALL UPON THE CHILD.

YOU SHOULD BE FREE TO FORGE YOUR OWN PATH, YOUR OWN DESTINY, AMONGST THE PEOPLES OF ETERNIA.
THIS GLADDENS US. YOU WOULD VOUCH FOR US?
IT IS IN MY POWER TO BESTOW THIS FREEDOM UPON YOU.
THE SHADOW WILL LIFT FROM US.
IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR WINE?
NO, NOT AT ALL.
I'M JUST CONCERNED ABOUT MY SISTER...

SWIFTWIND!
SWIFTWIND!
SWIFTWIND?
WHAT WAS THAT?
WHO'S THERE?
WHO IS WHISPERING?
JUST MY IMAGINATION...


SWIFTWIND!
IT'S ALL RIGHT! IT'S ALL RIGHT!
I'LL LEAD YOU BACK OUT OF THIS PLACE.
IF I CAN REMEMBER THE WAY...
COME ON.

DO YOU HEAR THAT, SWIFTWIND?
WHISPERING IN THE TREES?
WHO'S THERE?
STAY AWAY
OHH!
GO BACK
THAT'S NOT MY IMAGINATION!

IT BELONGS TO ME
WHO'S THERE? SHOW YOURSELF!
YOU WILL NEVER HAVE IT
I'M WARNING YOU, SHOW YOURSELF NOW OR--
OH!
THE GHOST RISES.

KING GRAYSKULL, BLOOD WET FROM THE THOUSAND-YEAR OLD WOUND THAT SLEW HIM.
WHAT ARE YOU?
HOW CAN YOU BE?
THEN THE VISION POINTS.
M-MY SWORD? BUT WHAT--

BLOOD!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME--
GONE.
IT'S BEEN TOO LONG.
I'M GOING AFTER ADORA.

NO NEED, ETERNIAN.
I HAVE JUST BEEN SENT WORD.
OUR MEN HAVE *FOUND* HER. SHE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE.
THAT'S A RELIEF. IS SHE HURT?
NOT AT *ALL*.
ENTER, PLEASE. SHE IS *WAITING* FOR YOU.
ADORA? *ADORA?*
THERE'S NO ONE HERE.
WRONG.

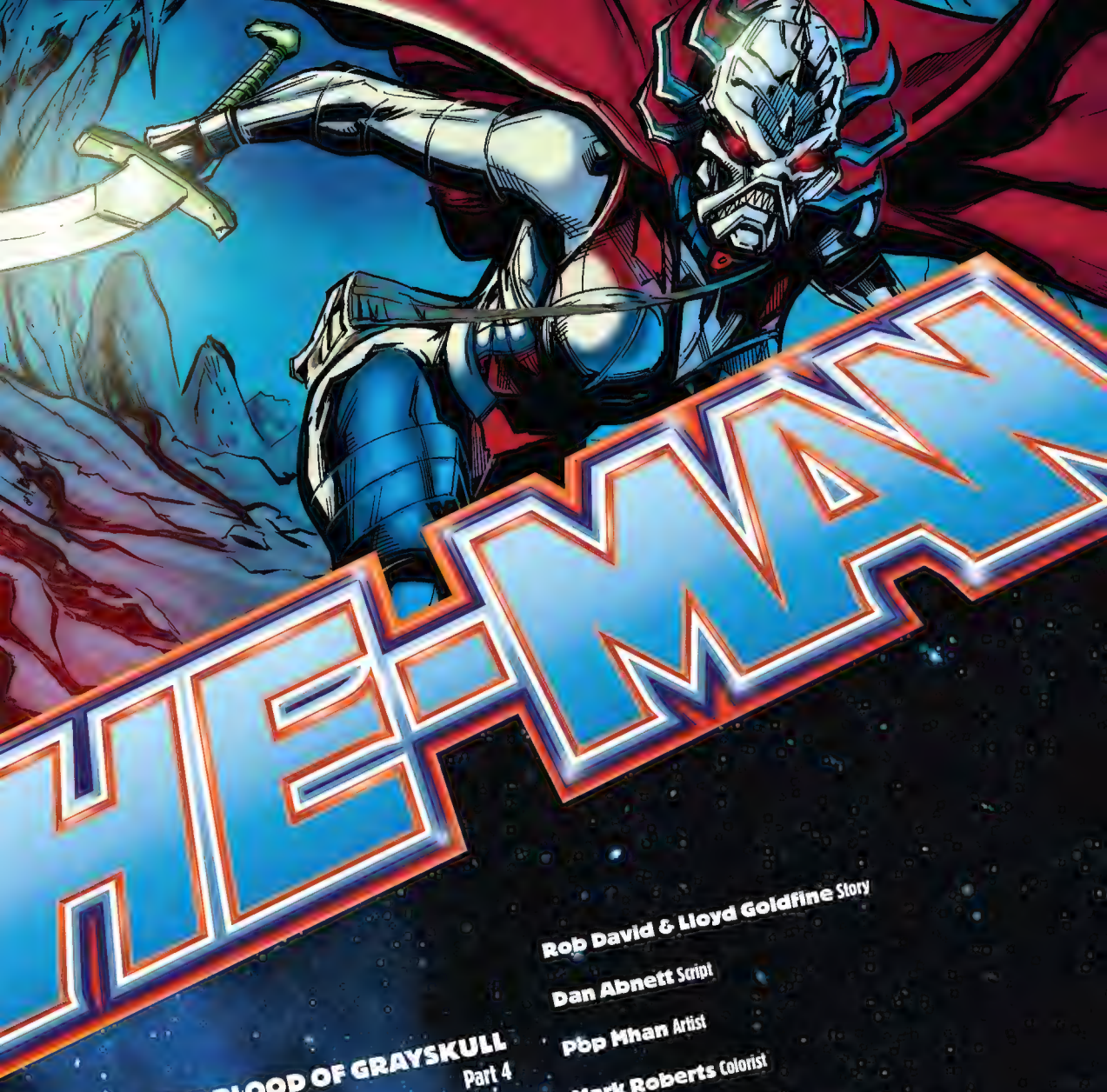
I AM.
TRI-KLOPS!

I--
I CAN'T--
DRAW YOUR FAMOUS SWORD? LIFT YOUR LIMBS?
NO, YOU CAN'T. THE GAR MIX A VERY EFFECTIVE PARALYTIC FROM THEIR ROOTS AND HERBS.
AS GRAYSKULL LEARNED IN THE LAST MOMENTS OF HIS LIFE ALL THOSE YEARS AGO.
W-WHAT... W-WHAT...D-DO...
I WANT? YOU, OF COURSE.
I AM A HUNTER, AND I WORK FOR THOSE WHO PAY WELL.
HORDAK PAYS BETTER THAN ANYONE.

I'VE BEEN TRACKING YOU FOR DAYS. I REACHED THE ISLAND AHEAD OF YOU AND STRUCK A DEAL WITH THE GAR.
I ASKED THEM TO DELIVER YOU TO ME. IN EXCHANGE, HORDAK WILL SPARE THEM THE DARKNESS OF HIS FRIGHT ZONE.
HE WILL OFFER THEM A SEAT AT HIS TABLE IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER.
HORDAK WILL BRING THE GAR OUT OF THEIR EXILE, AND BACK INTO THE LIGHT.
THEY COULD HARDLY REFUSE.
AS FOR YOU...HORDAK WANTS ONE THING ABOVE ALL OTHERS.
YOUR BLOOD.
INTERESTING.

WHY, ADORA.
IF HORDAK WANTS THE BLOOD OF HE-MAN...
N-NO...

...HE CAN MOST CERTAINLY HAVE IT!



THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Part 4

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

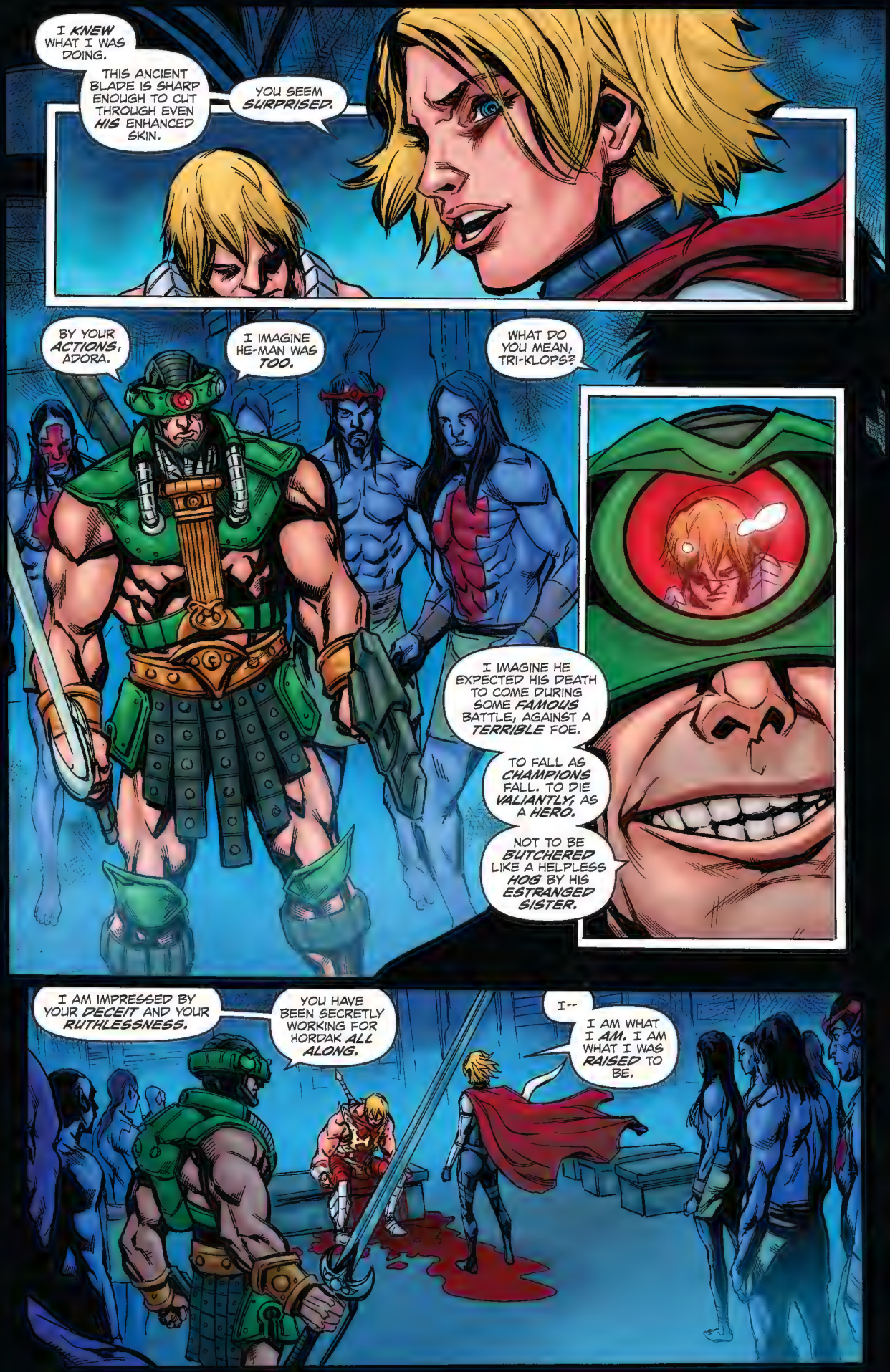
Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

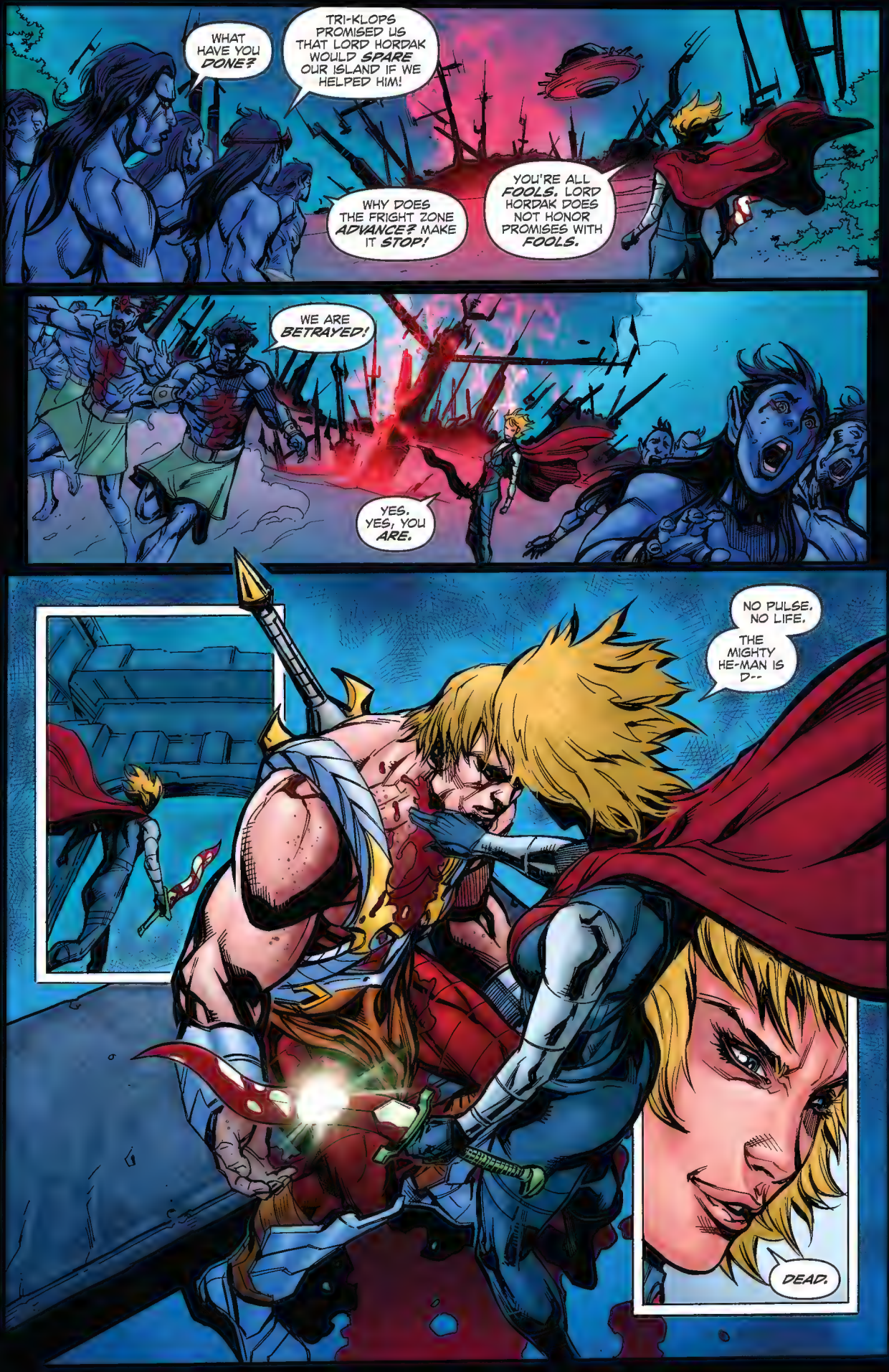
Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Stjepan Šejić

GAR TEMPLE, ON THE FORBIDDEN ISLE OF ANWAT-GAR...
THE BLOOD LOSS IS IMMENSE. YOU ALMOST SEVERED HIS NECK.
FOR ALL HIS VAUNTED POWER, THE MIGHTY HE-MAN WILL BE DEAD IN ANOTHER FEW SECONDS...

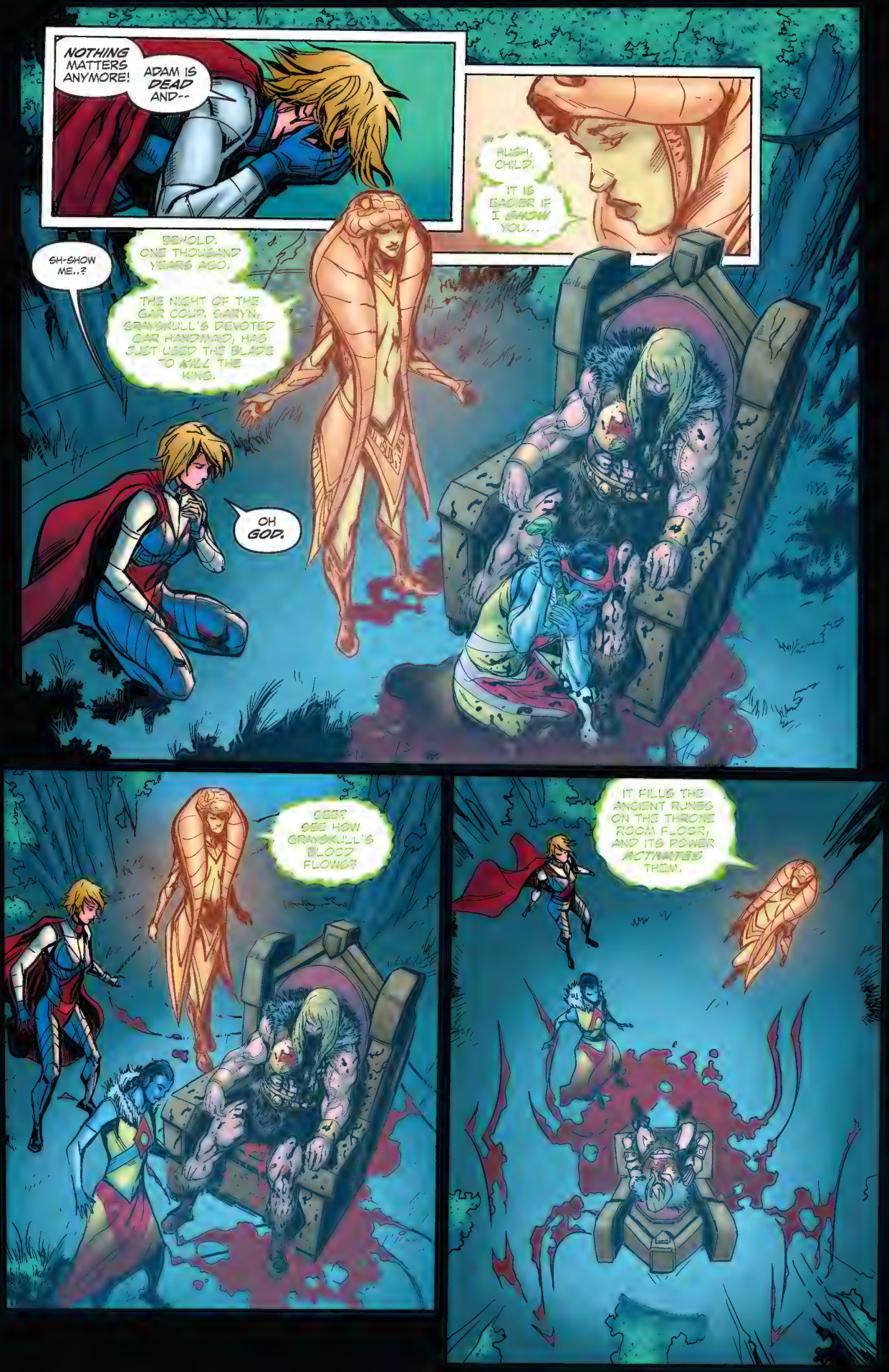

I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING.
THIS ANCIENT BLADE IS SHARP ENOUGH TO CUT THROUGH EVEN HIS ENHANCED SKIN.
YOU SEEM SURPRISED.
BY YOUR ACTIONS, ADORA.
I IMAGINE HE-MAN WAS TOO.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, TRI-KLOPS?
I IMAGINE HE EXPECTED HIS DEATH TO COME DURING SOME FAMOUS BATTLE, AGAINST A TERRIBLE FOE.
TO FALL AS CHAMPIONS FALL. TO DIE VALIANTLY, AS A HERO.
NOT TO BE BUTCHERED LIKE A HELPLESS HOG BY HIS ESTRANGED SISTER.
I AM IMPRESSED BY YOUR DECEIT AND YOUR RUTHLESSNESS.
YOU HAVE BEEN SECRETLY WORKING FOR HORDAK ALL ALONG.
I--
I AM WHAT I AM. I AM WHAT I WAS RAISED TO BE.

YOUR BLOOD-TIES DO NOT INTEREST ME.
HIS BLOOD IS ALL THAT MATTERS. IT IS WHAT HORDAK IS PAYING ME TO RETRIEVE.
I WILL TAKE IT TO HIM DIRECTLY.
WHEN YOU SEE HIM, TELL HORDAK THAT DESPARA SERVES AT HIS PLEASURE.
I HAVE NO WISH TO STAY ON THIS HAUNTED ISLE A MOMENT LONGER.
FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I ADVISE YOU TO LEAVE TOO.
WHY?
THE FRIGHT ZONE WILL SOON ENGULF THIS WRETCHED PLACE.
THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET UGLY.
THINGS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN UGLY.
FLEE THIS PLACE, DESPARA. WHILE YOU STILL CAN.


WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
TRI-KLOPS PROMISED US THAT LORD HORDAK WOULD SPARE OUR ISLAND IF WE HELPED HIM!
WHY DOES THE FRIGHT ZONE ADVANCE? MAKE IT STOP!
YOU'RE ALL FOOLS. LORD HORDAK DOES NOT HONOR PROMISES WITH FOOLS.
WE ARE BETRAYED!
YES. YES, YOU ARE.
NO PULSE, NO LIFE.
THE MIGHTY HE-MAN IS D--
DEAD.

ADAM? WHY AREN'T YOU BREATHING?
ADAM, WHERE HAS ALL THIS BLOOD COME FROM?
ADAM, SAY SOMETHING...
H-HOW? W-WHAT HAVE I--?
OH GODS! OH GODS!
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING!
SORCERESS! SORCERESS! HELP ME!
I HAVE KILLED HIM! I HAVE KILLED HIM!
OH SORCERESS! HELP ME!
I WAS NOT MYSELF! SOMETHING POSSESSED ME!
HELP ME! HELP ME UNDO THIS!
HELP ME! HELP ME!
OR I SWEAR I WILL TAKE MY OWN LIFE TOO!
HELP MEEEEEEE!

STAY YOUR HAND, ADORA. CONTAIN YOUR DESPAIR.
T-TEELA? S-SORCERESS?
I HAVE DONE THE MOST TERRIBLE THING! I HAVE...I HAVE SLAIN HIM... I HAVE...
I DID NOT FORESEE THIS.
THE STRANDS OF FATE ARE MURKY AND COMPLEX. I DID NOT EXPECT THE CURSED BLADE TO ENTRAP YOU SO FAST.
C-CURSED BLADE? THIS IS A CURSED BLADE?
IT IS THE BLADE THAT WAS USED TO MURDER GRAYSKULL A THOUSAND YEARS AGO.
WHAT? WHAT?
THEN WHY DID YOU SEND IT TO ME? WHY DID YOU GIVE IT TO ME IF YOU KNEW ITS CURSE WOULD DRIVE ME MAD?
IN THE NAME OF ALL THAT IS SACRED, TEELA, IT MADE ME KILL ADAM!
MY OWN BROTHER!
I TOLD YOU, FATE IS A COMPLEX MECHANISM.
IT WAS VITAL FOR YOU TO POSSESS THE BLADE.
VITAL, BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU MUST DO NOW.


NOTHING MATTERS ANYMORE!
ADAM IS DEAD AND--
HUSH, CHILD.
IT IS EASIER IF I SHOW YOU...
SH-SHOW ME..?
BEHOLD. ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.
THE NIGHT OF THE GAR COUP. GARYN, GRAYSKULL'S DEVOTED GAR HANDMAID, HAS JUST USED THE BLADE TO KILL THE KING.
OH GOD.
SEE? SEE HOW GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD FLOWS?
IT FILLS THE ANCIENT RUNES ON THE THRONE ROOM FLOOR, AND ITS POWER ACTIVATES THEM.

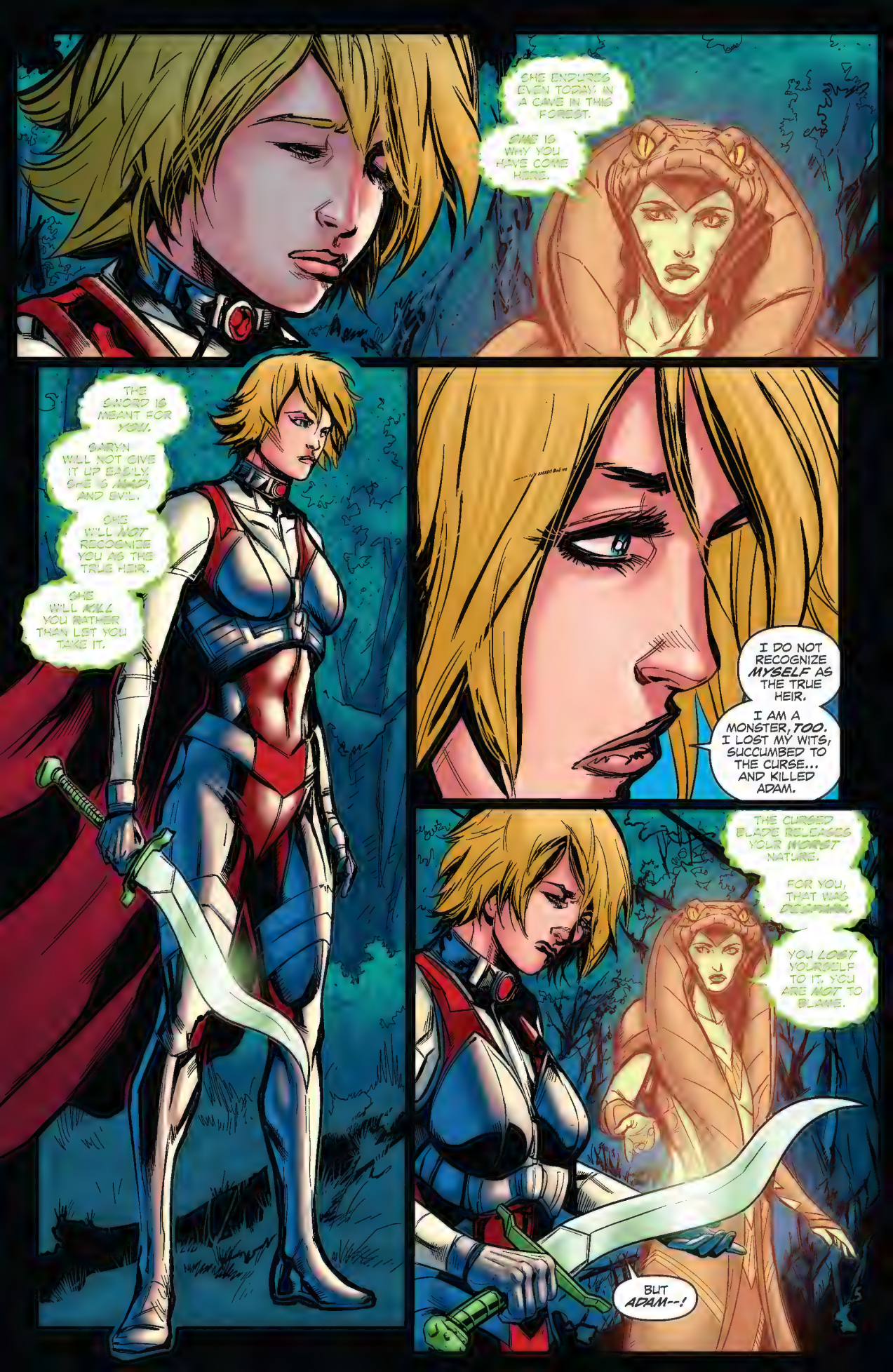
A SECRET DOOR?
OPENED BY THE BLOOD, SARYN IS EQUALLY SURPRISED.
WHERE DID IT LEAD?
THAT IS WHAT SARYN WONDERS.
FOLLOW. FOLLOW HER.
BEHOLD, THE FORGE OF STARKILL. WHERE THE KING CRAFTED THE SWORD OF POWER!
CREATOR'S BREATH!

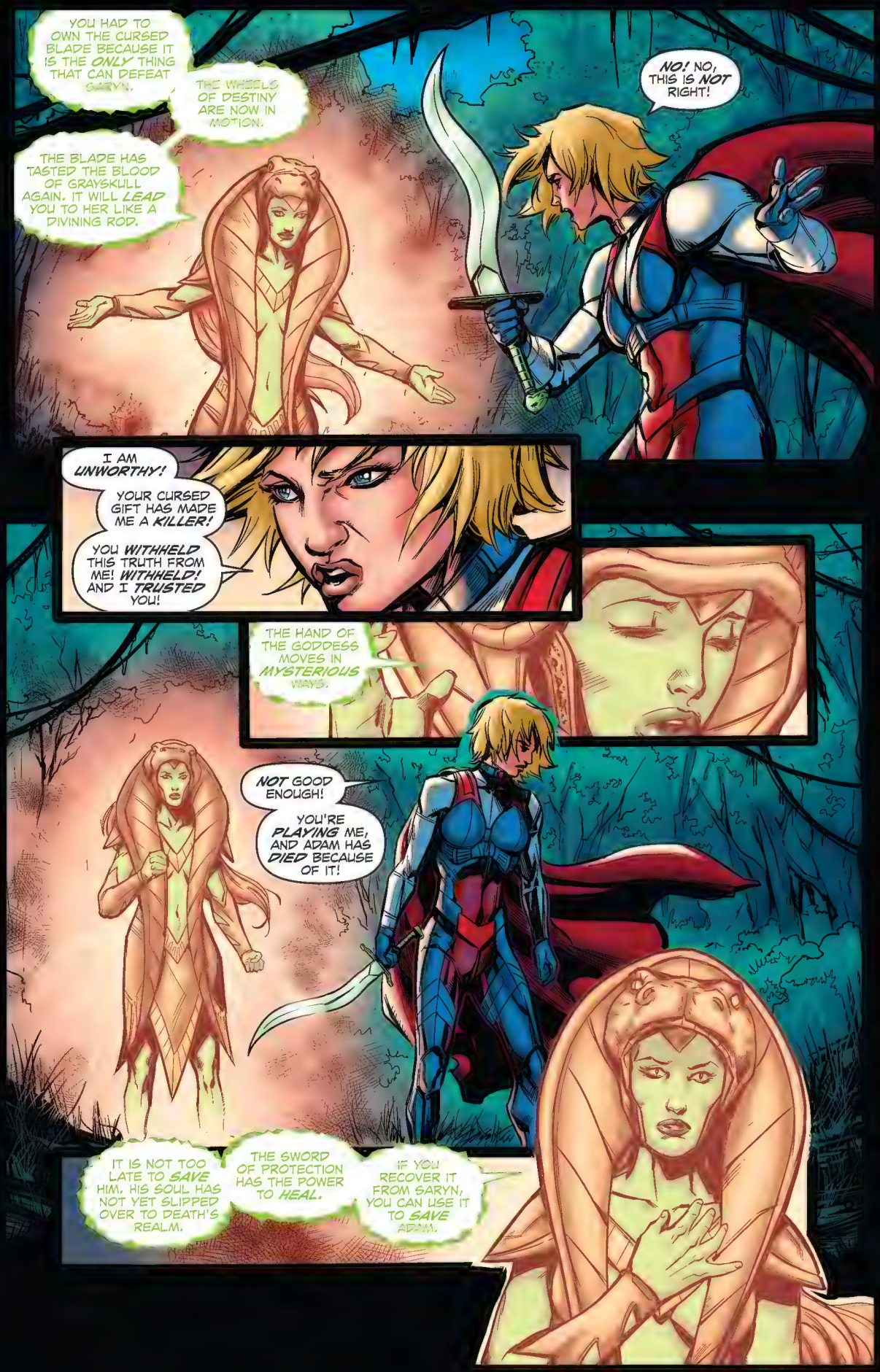
WAIT! ANOTHER SWORD?
INDEED. THIS IS WHAT THE TRAITOR SARYN FINDS THIS NIGHT.
ANOTHER SWORD?
GRAYSKULL DID NOT FORGE ONE SWORD IN THE FIRES OF ETERNITY. HE FORGED TWO.
THE SWORD OF POWER... AND THE SWORD OF PROTECTION.
TO DEFEAT HORDAK, GRAYSKULL MADE HIS SWORD OF POWER.
AND HE FORGED THE SECOND SWORD TO PROTECT ETERNIA IN CASE HIS POWER EVER FELL INTO THE WRONG HANDS.
THE SWORD OF PROTECTION WAS A SECRET SWORD.
NO ONE EVER KNEW IT EXISTED.
AT THIS MOMENT, WHAT DOES SARYN WONDER?

DOES SHE THINK OF ADI, THE TREACHEROUS LEADER OF THE COUP? AND THE WORDS OF VENOM HE USED TO TURN HER HEART TO MURDER?
"SHE WILL BEAR THE SAVIOR WHO WILL FIGHT BACK THE DESTRUCTION WROUGHT BY GRAYSKULL'S MADNESS."
WAS THIS THE WILL OF THE GODDESS? THAT SHE SHOULD FIND THIS SECRET SWORD?
OR THE WORK OF SOMETHING ELSE? SOMETHING... SINISTER?
SARYN TURNS HER THOUGHTS TO THE FUTURE. AND TO HER PROPHESIED CHILD.
ETERNIA'S SAVIOR..... HER LITTLE SAVIOR.
HERS.
THIS MUST BE DESTINY, SARYN TELLS HERSELF.
THIS MUST BE RIGHTEOUS.
SHE NOW THINKS ONLY AS A MOTHER.

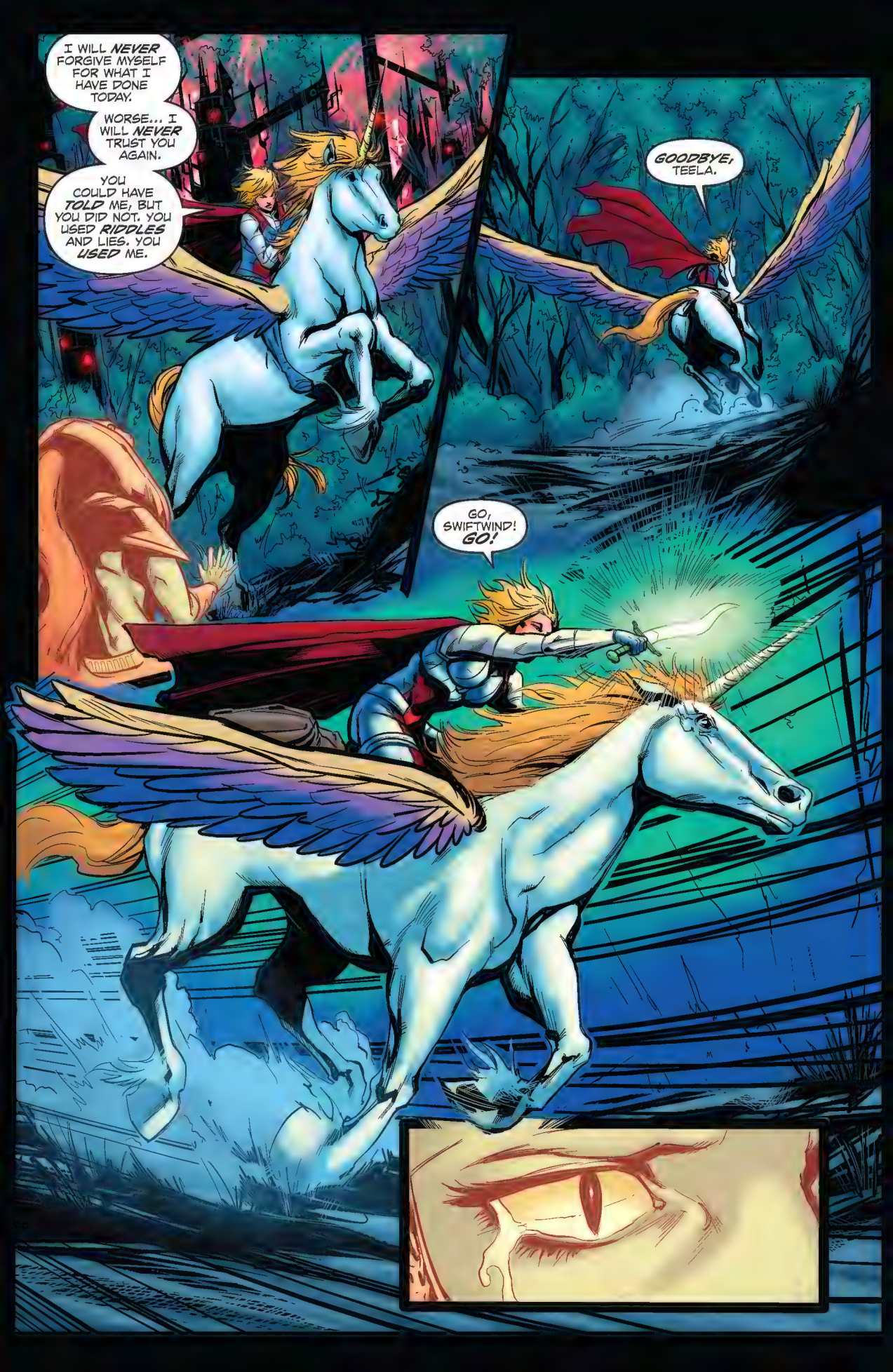
SARYN FLEES GRAYSKULL.
SHE TAKES THE SWORD AND HIDES IT FROM EVERYONE, INCLUDING ADI, THE TRAITOR. SHE WILL KEEP IT SECRET. SHE WILL PROTECT THE SWORD AT ALL COSTS FOR HER CHILD.
NO ACT TOWARD THAT END WILL BE TOO CRUEL.
ADI WAS TRIUMPHANT. THE GAR RULED THE LAND, USHERING IN AN AGE OF TERROR.
UNTIL A RESISTANCE, LED BY THE LONE SURVIVING SON OF KING GRAYSKULL AND QUEEN VEENA, FINALLY OVERTHREW THEM.
ONLY ADI AND SARYN ESCAPED THE RETRIBUTION.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
ADI WAS DEAD WHEN THEY FOUND HIM.
THEY ASSUMED HE HAD TAKEN POISON AND KILLED HIMSELF.
THAT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE AT ALL.

NO, IT DOES NOT.
SARYN WAS NEVER LOCATED.
THE RESISTANCE RECOVERED THE SWORD OF POWER. BUT RECOGNIZING THE TEMPTATION OF ITS POWER, THEY CHOSE TO HIDE THE BLADE AWAY, UNTIL DESTINY, AND THE HAND OF THE GODDESS, WOULD REVEAL ITS RIGHTFUL HEIR.
WHAT OF THE SWORD OF PROTECTION? WHAT OF THE SECOND SWORD?
NO ONE EVER KNEW EVEN TO LOOK FOR IT.
SARYN STILL HAS IT.
STILL?
CURSED BY THE BLOOD SHE HAD SPILLED, SARYN BECAME AN IMMORTAL MONSTER.
THE FABLED WITCH OF ANWAT-GAR.


SHE ENDURES EVEN TODAY, IN A CAVE IN THIS FOREST.
SHE IS WHY YOU HAVE COME HERE.
THE SWORD IS MEANT FOR YOU.
SARYN WILL NOT GIVE IT UP EASILY. SHE IS MAD, AND EVIL.
SHE WILL NOT RECOGNIZE YOU AS THE TRUE HEIR.
SHE WILL KILL YOU RATHER THAN LET YOU TAKE IT.
I DO NOT RECOGNIZE MYSELF AS THE TRUE HEIR.
I AM A MONSTER, TOO. I LOST MY WITS, SUCCUMBED TO THE CURSE... AND KILLED ADAM.
THE CURSED BLADE RELEASES YOUR WORST NATURE.
FOR YOU, THAT WAS REVENGE.
YOU LOST YOURSELF TO IT. YOU ARE NOT TO BLAME.
BUT ADAM--!


YOU HAD TO OWN THE CURSED BLADE BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT CAN DEFEAT SARYN.
THE WHEELS OF DESTINY ARE NOW IN MOTION.
THE BLADE HAS TASTED THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL AGAIN. IT WILL LEAD YOU TO HER LIKE A DIVINING ROD.
NO! NO, THIS IS NOT RIGHT!
I AM UNWORTHY!
YOUR CURSED GIFT HAS MADE ME A KILLER!
YOU WITHHELD THIS TRUTH FROM ME! WITHHELD! AND I TRUSTED YOU!
THE HAND OF THE GODDESS MOVES IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS.
NOT GOOD ENOUGH!
YOU'RE PLAYING ME, AND ADAM HAS DIED BECAUSE OF IT!
IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO SAVE HIM. HIS SOUL HAS NOT YET SLIPPED OVER TO DEATH'S REALM.
THE SWORD OF PROTECTION HAS THE POWER TO HEAL.
IF YOU RECOVER IT FROM SARYN, YOU CAN USE IT TO SAVE ADAM.

I'LL DO IT.
BUT I DOUBT I'LL EVER TRUST YOU OR YOUR WORDS AGAIN.
SWIFTWIND!
GOOD BOY, GOOD BOY.
HURRY. THE FRIGHT ZONE IS CONSUMING THE ISLAND.
ONCE THAT PROCESS IS COMPLETE, HE-MAN WILL BE BEYOND THE POWER OF THE SWORD TO SAVE.

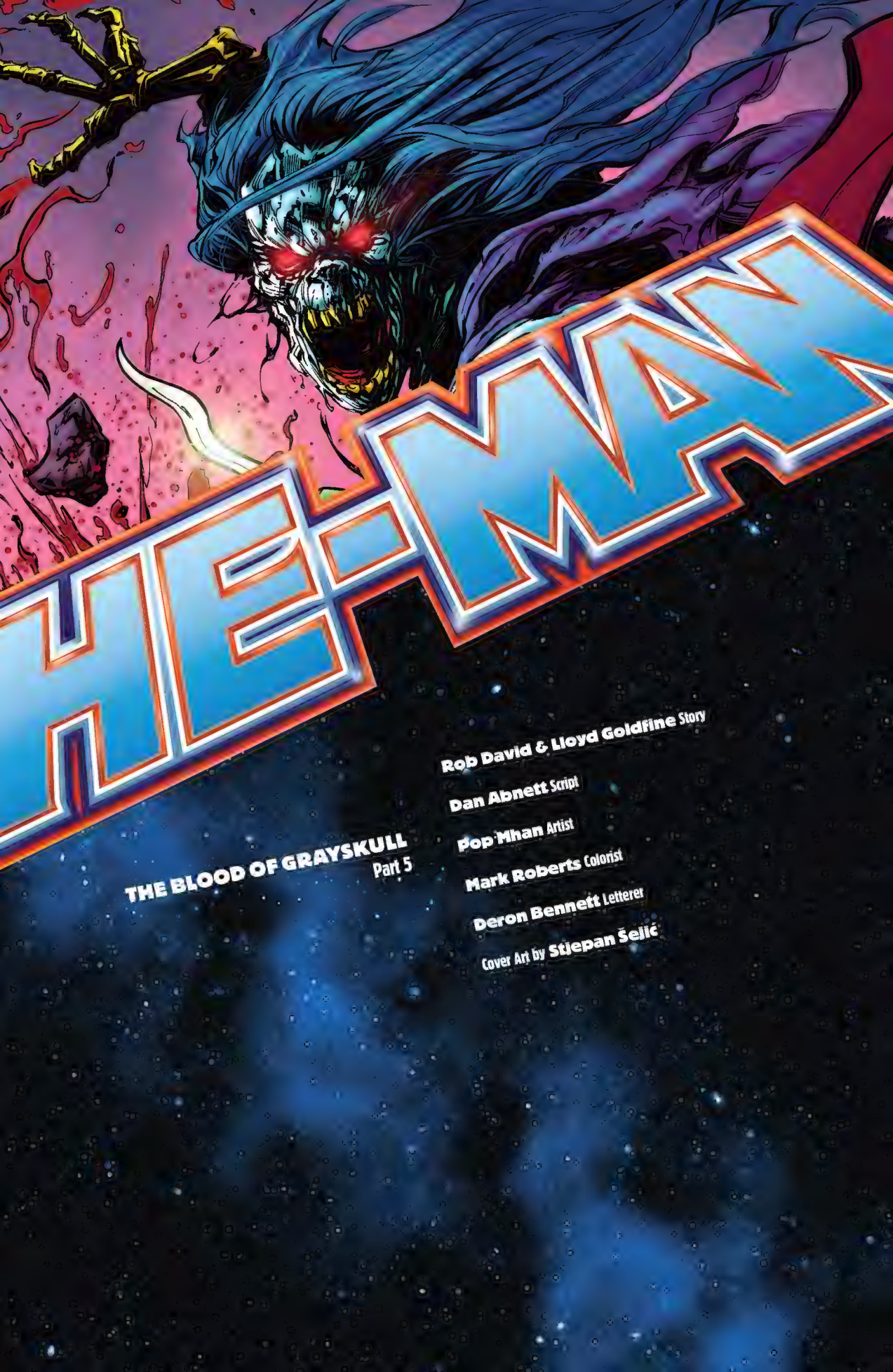

I WILL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR WHAT I HAVE DONE TODAY.
WORSE... I WILL NEVER TRUST YOU AGAIN.
YOU COULD HAVE TOLD ME, BUT YOU DID NOT. YOU USED RIDDLES AND LIES. YOU USED ME.
GOODBYE, TEELA.
GO, SWIFTWIND! GO!

THIS WAY! THIS WAY, SWIFTWIND!
THIS. THIS IS THE PLACE.

EASY. EASY, SWIFTWIND.
STAY HERE.
I *FEAR* THE WITCH. I *FEAR* SARYN.
BUT SHE WILL COME TO FEAR ME, *TOO...*

...SHE WILL COME TO FEAR DESPARA.
THE SWORD! I SEE IT!
PLOIK
PLOIK
PLUPP

GRRR
YOU SHALL NOT HAVE IT!
THE WITCH! THE WITCH FROM MY DREAMS!



THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL
Part 5

Rob David & Lloyd Goldfine Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by Stjepan Šejić

SARYN!
UGHHNN!
THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL WILL SPILL AGAIN THIS DAY!

I COME TO YOU AS DESPARA!
YOU WILL FEAR ME. YOU WILL FALL.
YOU ARE NOTHING BUT AN UPSTART!
YOU DO NOT BEGIN TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH HERE!
UGHHNN!
I KNOW YOU HAVE COME TO STEAL GRAYSKULL'S SWORD!
YOU WILL NOT HAVE IT!

YOU ARE NOT WORTHY OF IT!
IT IS MEANT FOR MY CHILD!
FOR I AM THE MOTHER OF THE SAVIOR!
FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS, I HAVE GUARDED THIS SWORD. ITS POWER SO GREAT, IT BURNS MY FLESH! YOU WILL NOT HAVE IT!
YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A THIEF IN THE NIGHT, AND I WILL SLAY YOU!
UGHNKK!
I W- WILL HAVE THE SWORD, MONSTER!
I WILL B-BRING ADAM BACK FROM THE VEIL OF DEATH!

A-HA HA HA HA!
WHY DO YOU CARE SO?
HE IS MY BROTHER--
HE-MAN? HE ABANDONED YOU! GRAYSKULL ABANDONED YOU!
THEY LIED TO YOU! THEY ARE CORRUPT!
NHH!
WHENCE COMES THIS FOOLISH LOYALTY?
THEY ARE YOUR ENEMIES AND HAVE DENIED YOU YOUR BIRTHRIGHT!
N-NO!
THAT CURSED SWORD YOU WIELD, IT IS LINKED TO ME. IT HAS TOLD ME YOUR SECRETS...
WE ARE THE SAME, YOU AND I...
...DESTROYERS OF GRAYSKULL'S LEGACY.

THE VERY GARB YOU WEAR, THAT MASK, THAT NAME... THEY SHOW YOUR TRUE ALLEGIANCE!
NO!
FOR ALL THAT THEY HIDE, THERE IS A STRANGE TRUTH IN MASKS!
UHKK!
KKKHH-KKK-KKK!
UGHNNN!

UHN... ≥KOF KOFF...≤
THEN PERHAPS IT IS BEST THAT YOU TORE IT OFF ME.
I WILL LIVE THAT TRUTH NO LONGER.
NFF!
WHAT IS THIS?
I RIPPED OFF MORE THAN YOUR MASK, GIRL.
A LOCKET...?
GIVE ME THAT!
UH UH UH!
WHO IS THIS?

YOUR PRETTY MOTHER?
NO! NO!
OH, HA HA HA! THE THOUGHT OF YOUR MOTHER PUTS FIRE IN YOUR BELLY, DOES IT?
MONSTER! GIVE IT BACK TO ME!
SHE CARED NOT FOR YOU EITHER, NO MORE THAN GRAYSKULL OR HE-MAN!
WHAT THOUGHT DID SHE GIVE TO YOUR DESTINY?
NOBODY CHOOSES MY DESTINY BUT ME, WITCH!
AND I... CHOOSE... GRAYSKULL!

AGH! WHAT IS THIS??
UAAARGHH!
"AND I CHOOSE GRAYSKULL." THE WORDS THE SWORD OF PROTECTION HAS WAITED ONE THOUSAND YEARS TO HEAR...
EIIIUNNNGGHHG!
I CHOOSE GRAYSKULL.

A THOUSAND YEARS THE SWORD HAS WAITED TO REVEAL ITS TRUE POWER...
...TO ITS RIGHTFUL HEIR.
AND ADORA SAYS THE WORDS, AS THOUGH SHE HAS SAID THEM COUNTLESS TIMES BEFORE...
FOR THE HONOR OF GRAYSKULL...
SSKKZZOOOOOM

I AM
SHE-RA

THE LIGHT... B-BLINDS ME... LONG AGES' END...
...I P-PERISH... BUT MY S-SON WILL LIVE ON...

FASTER, GENTLE SWIFTWIND! FASTER!
THE FRIGHT ZONE GROWS! IT IS THE END OF DAYS FOR ANWAT-GAR!
AND ADAM'S SOUL DRAWS EVER FURTHER AWAY FROM THIS WORLD.
PLEASE LET ME BE IN TIME. PLEASE.
LET THE SWORD OF PROTECTION BE ENOUGH...
PLEASE LET IT BE ENOUGH...

NO...
I AM TOO LATE. THE GATES OF DEATH HAVE CLOSED.
OH!
...
S-SISTER?

WELCOME BACK TO LIFE, BROTHER. THE WORLD HAS MISSED YOU.
I KNOW THIS IS ALL A BIT OF A BLUR FOR YOU. YOU'RE STILL COMING TO YOUR SENSES...
...BUT TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.
I DON'T... I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
HE-MAN, LISTEN TO ME.
SISTER? WHAT--?
LISTEN TO ME. THE FRIGHT ZONE IS UPON US ALL.
CREATOR'S BREATH!
BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL--

SHAZAAAM!
..I HAVE THE POWER!

SSSHHKOOOM
SHHKKZZKKK
SHHZZZKKKT

SO HORDAK'S MENACE FALLS.
SO IT DOES, BROTHER. SO IT DOES.
SHHH! EASY, SWIFTWIND. IT'S ALL DONE NOW.
MAYBE NOT.

THE FRIGHT ZONE IS GONE.
Y-YOU HAVE SAVED ANWAT-GAR!
WE WERE SCARED...SO SCARED...
FOR SO LONG...
GET UP. RISE.
YOU TRULY ARE A BROKEN PEOPLE. I WILL NO LONGER PERMIT DARKNESS TO RULE OVER ANWAT-GAR, OR ETERNIA. IT ALL ENDS NOW.
YOUR ISLAND IS SAVED. AND YOUR CURSE IS LIFTED.
ANWAT-GAR AND YOUR PEOPLE ARE PARIAH NO MORE.
YOU NEVER CHANGE.
YOU ON THE OTHER HAND...
SOMETHING TELLS ME WE HAVE A LOT TO TALK ABOUT.

EPILOGUE
CASTLE GRAYSKULL, FORTRESS OF MYSTERY AND POWER.
ONCE THE SACRED STRONGHOLD OF HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.
NOW THE PITILESS HEART OF A DARKENING UNIVERSE. NOW GROUND ZERO OF HORDAK'S FRIGHT ZONE ON ETERNIA.
TRI-KLOPS.
I TRUST YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WERE SENT FOR?
I HAVE IT, GRIZZLOR.
THE BLOOD OF HE-MAN.
THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL.
COME.

WHERE IS--?
SHUT YOUR TALK, TRI-KLOPS. SHOW DEFERENCE.
WE ARE HERE SO HE WILL MANIFEST.
WELL?
MY LORD HORDAK, HE HAS DELIVERED THE BLOOD.
H-HERE, LORD.
THEN I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED, AT LONG LAST.
THE MEANS TO ESCAPE DESPONDOS...
...AND THUS THE ABILITY TO BREAK THE SECRETS OF THIS CASTLE...
..AND CLAIM THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL ONCE AND FOR ALL!

STUCK IN A MOMENT

Rob David Writer

Tom Derenick Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

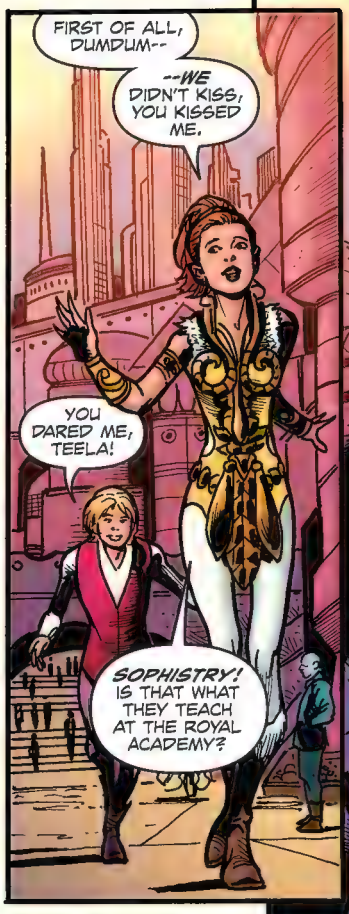
Special thanks to
Gabriel De La Torre and **Lloyd Goldfine**

TWELVE YEARS AGO
..THE POWER!!
BRRZZZRPT
ARRRGHH!!!
JUST IN TIME.
JUST IN TIME.

REINFORCEMENTS.
MENDOR, FAMILY PHYSICIAN.
PRINCE ADAM, YOU CAN LET GO NOW! YOU'VE DONE ALL YOU CAN!
ADAM!
GUARDS! SEE TO THE PRINCE, HE'S NOT WELL!
PLEASE LET ME HAVE SAVED HIM! PLEASE.
--PRINCE IS SECURE, GENERAL, BUT THE KING IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION!
KEEP ADAM SAFE! DO YOU HEAR ME, LT. DAEGAR?? DO NOT RETURN HIM TO THE CITY.
ETERNOS IS IN FLAMES! THE HIGH COUNCIL HAS BEEN MURDERED. REPORTS ARE COMING IN THAT PRINCE KELDOR IS IN OPEN REVOLT AGAINST THE KING!
CREATOR'S GRACE!
I CAN'T HAVE HEARD THAT RIGHT.
THINGS ARE MOVING SO FAST. AND I'M POWERLESS TO STOP IT.
AND THEN I SEE IT. A FALCON. THE TOTEM OF ZOAR. AND SUDDENLY, I FEEL THERE'S HOPE THAT EVERYTHING MIGHT ONE DAY BE AS RIGHT AS IT WAS...

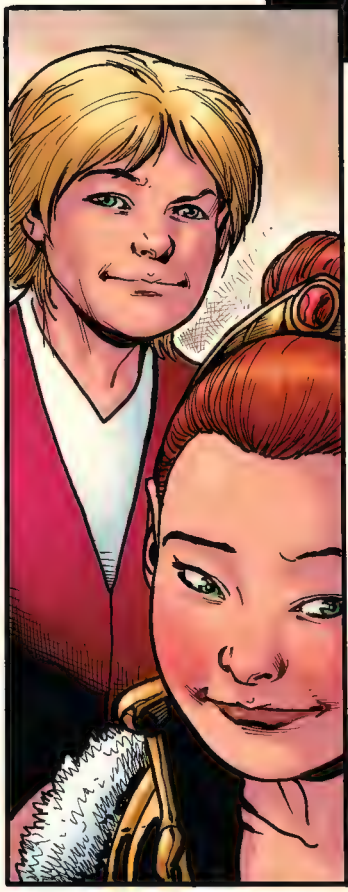
...THIS MORNING.
THE PERFECT MOMENT.
A FIRST KISS.
IF ONLY I COULD *HOLD* THIS MOMENT, *AND LIVE IN IT,* MAKE IT A *WORLD* OF ITS OWN.
BUT LIFE MOVES ON.

BLECH!
BLECH? WE KISS AND YOU SAY BLECH?


FIRST OF ALL, DUMDUM--
--WE DIDN'T KISS, YOU KISSED ME.
YOU DARED ME, TEELA!
SOPHISTRY! IS THAT WHAT THEY TEACH AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY?

SECOND OF ALL, I DON'T KISS BOYS. ESPECIALLY BOY PRINCES WHO CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO COMB THEIR HAIR OR BRUSH THEIR TEETH.
OUCH.
I'M AN OFFICER!
A PRIVATE - AN ACTING PRIVATE, COME TO THINK OF IT!
AN OFFICER IN MY FATHER'S ROYAL GUARD.
WHAT WAS THAT? I COULDN'T HEAR YOU OVER ALL THE NEPOTISM.
BESIDES, I THINK IT'S ACTUALLY THE KING'S GUARD. MY FATHER.

LISTEN UP, ADAM AND LISTEN WELL. WHY DO YOU THINK I KICKED MY WAY INTO THE SERVICE?
ER, TO PIN A MEDAL NEXT TO THAT CHIP ON YOUR SHOULDER?
TO PROTECT YOU, DUMDUM!
AND WHY IS THAT?



YOUR SILENCE SPEAKS VOLUMES, MY LADY!
BUT REST ASSURED, YOUR PRINCE IS PERFECTLY SA-
ADAM-

--LOOK OUT!
SCREEEEEECH
PRINCE ADAM! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
WE MIGHT HAVE KILLED YOU!
DUNCAN, GENERAL OF THE ROYAL GUARD. MASTER STRATEGIST, INVENTOR, AND IF ALL THAT WEREN'T INTIMIDATING ENOUGH...
...TEELA'S DAD.
SORRY, SIR.
DON'T WORRY, DAD. I PROMISED THE QUEEN I'D GET THE PRINCE BACK SAFE AND SOUND.
BIG CONVOY.
YES. THE AVIONS ARE ENGAGED IN A TRADE DISPUTE WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE ADREENID, WHO HAVE BLOCKED THEIR EASTERN SKYWAYS. IF WE CAN'T NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT QUICKLY, IT COULD LEAD TO WAR.
IS MY FATHER SENDING JUST THE GUARD?
NO, NOT JUST THE GUARD...

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.
THIS IS MOST UNLIKE YOU, ADAM...

...YOU'VE NEVER SHOWN ANY INTEREST IN STATE AFFAIRS BEFORE.
I KNOW, FATHER. BUT I WISH TO ACCOMPANY YOUR MEN TO AVION. TO OBSERVE, SO I CAN LEARN—
NO, ABSOLUTELY NOT. YOU'RE JUST A BOY.
ISN'T IT TIME HE BECAME A MAN, BROTHER?
PRINCE KELDOR. MY UNCLE AND MENTOR.
IT HEARTENS ME TO SEE YOU SHOW SOME INITIATIVE, SON. BUT MY ANSWER IS STILL NO. THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE DANGEROUS.
BUT FATHER, I...I...
GO ON, ADAM, TELL HIM.
I WANT TO BECOME A MASTER.

ADAM, DO YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES THIS REALM SO *SPECIAL?*
ETERNIA IS HOME TO THE MAGIC THAT *CREATED* THE UNIVERSE. IF OUR WORLD WERE TO BE *DESTROYED,* THE VERY FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE WOULD *UNRAVEL.*
DO YOU *UNDERSTAND,* ADAM? AS *ETERNIA* FARES, SO FARES THE *UNIVERSE.*
YOUR ANCESTOR, *KING GRAYSKULL,* UNDERSTOOD THIS. *DIED* FOR THIS.
HE *KNEW* THE MAGIC OF ETERNIA MUST BE *GUARDED AT ALL COSTS,* LEST IT FALL IN THE *WRONG* HANDS.
GRAYSKULL IS A *MYTH,* RANDOR. A FAIRYTALE TOLD TO INSPIRE *YOUNG WARRIORS.*
WARRIORS LIKE YOUR *SON.*
NO, KELDOR, GRAYSKULL WAS THE *FIRST* MASTER, BUT HE WOULD NOT BE THE *LAST.*
IN THE EON SINCE, *BRAVE WARRIORS* HAVE RISEN IN SERVICE OF THIS *REALM.*
DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT TAKES TO *JOIN* THEIR RANKS, ADAM?
OR DO YOU THINK RACING HOVER BOARDS AND CHASING DUNCAN'S DAUGHTER QUALIFIES YOU?
HOW CAN YOU *HOPE* TO BECOME A *MASTER,* WHEN YOU'VE *NEVER* LEARNED TO MASTER *YOURSELF?*

ADAM, I'M SORRY.
UNCLE, I DID WHAT *YOU* SUGGESTED. I *TOLD* HIM WHAT I WANTED.
I THOUGHT THE *COURAGE* OF YOUR REQUEST WOULD MAKE HIM SEE THE SAME *POTENTIAL* IN YOU THAT I SEE...
BUT *STUBBORNNESS* HAS ALWAYS BEEN RANDOR'S VICE. THERE'S VERY LITTLE ROOM IN HIS HEAD FOR NEW IDEAS ONCE HE'S MADE UP HIS MIND.
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF THE KING IS SHELTERING YOU, ADAM, *AFRAID* OF WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS. AFRAID OF HOW TRULY *GREAT* YOU CAN BECOME.
ME? GREAT? I DON'T EVEN THINK HE *SEES* ME.
YES...I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO FEEL INVISIBLE.

MY BROTHER AND I SHARE A FATHER BUT NOT A MOTHER. I NEVER KNEW THE WOMAN WHO BORE ME.
SHE WAS A GAR WOMAN WHO RESCUED KING MIRO WHEN HIS SHIP CRASHED UPON THE SHORES OF ANWAT-GAR. FORBIDDEN ANWAT-GAR.
SHE CAME TO HIM ALMOST AS A VISION, AS MY FATHER TOLD IT...
MY FATHER DID WHAT SHE ASKED...TO A POINT.
I SUSPECT HE SAW ME AS A SIGN OF SHAME.
HE HAD CONCEIVED A BASTARD WITH A CREATURE THE WORLD HAD DEEMED SUBHUMAN.
WITH A KILLER OF GRAYSKULL.
AND HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW ME TO RETURN TO ANWAT-GAR.
UNCLE, I NEVER KNEW.
SUCH MATTERS ARE NOT SPOKEN OF IN THE LIGHT OF DAY.
SO YOU KNOW, ADAM, WHY I TAKE SUCH AN INTEREST IN YOU. WE ARE NOT JUST KIN, WE ARE KINDRED SPIRITS. BOTH INVISIBLE PRINCES.
THEN YOU KNOW WHY I MUST DO WHAT I HAVE TO DO.
NO, ADAM, I KNOW WE TALKED ABOUT IT, BUT IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
YOUR FATHER WAS RIGHT TO SAY NO.
PLEASE, UNCLE KELDOR...

"...I JUST NEED TO SHOW HIM. SHOW HIM HOW WRONG HE IS ABOUT ME."
HALF AN HOUR LATER I'M SOARING THROUGH ZARCANE ON MY UNCLE'S SKYSLED.
ZARCANE. A TREACHEROUS NO-MAN'S LAND. A KNOWN HAVEN FOR THIEVES.
I'VE DONE SMARTER THINGS IN MY LIFE.
HE'S APPROACHING. JUST LIKE YOU SAID HE WOULD.
HE'S TO BE CAPTURED, NOT KILLED. YOU UNDERSTAND? SHOULD MY PLANS TONIGHT GO AWRY—

-- WE SHALL NEED MY NEPHEW AS HOSTAGE.
PLEASE EXCUSE ME, BUT I MUST SIT OUT THIS SESSION, MY FRIENDS. I'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT MY SON HAS LEFT THE CITY, UNGUARDED.
HE'S HEADING NORTH. TOWARD THE MYSTIC MOUNTAINS. TOWARD AVION.
GODDESS, THAT WILL TAKE HIM THROUGH ZARCANE.
WELL HE CERTAINLY SHOWS THE COURAGE OF HIS CONVICTIONS.
ADAM'S A CHILD, BROTHER. HE'S UPSET. HE'S NOT THINKING CLEARLY. I MUST RETRIEVE HIM.
RANDOR, YOUR PLACE IS HERE. SEND YOUR MEN FOR ADAM.
NO, IT HAS TO BE ME. I WAS TOO HARSH EARLIER. THIS IS MY FAULT...
PLEASE, KELDOR, TAKE MY SEAT AT THE HEAD OF THE HIGH COUNCIL TONIGHT.

TO THE KING!
YES, TO THE KING!
THE MIGHTY.
THE DESTROYER.
KING...
GAACKAKRGH!!
...KELDOR!
A MOST EXCELLENT VINTAGE, MISS LYN.
PRESSED FROM THE GRAPES OF WRATH THEMSELVES.
AND SO, IT BEGINS...

KRAK
WHAT WAS THAT--?!
RRRRARRRRRH
ARRGHHH!
UGH!
NO!
NO!
RAAAARRRRRRR

BRRRRRYYYYY
HRRRM?
ZATATATATATATA
FATHER!
MY LORD, WE'VE GOT A LOCK ON THE PRINCE, GOING IN TO RETRIEVE–
WHAT THE–
RAWWRR!
YARRRGGHHH!!

BRANT-24
NO!
FATHER!
UGGGHHH...

ADAM...RUN... RUN AWAY...
GRRRRRR!!!
DAD, I'M SO SORRY!
I'M SO SORRY!
ADAM... PLEASE...GET SAFE...
NO, I WON'T LEAVE YOU, FATHER. I'LL NEVER LEAVE YOU!
I CAN SAVE YOU!

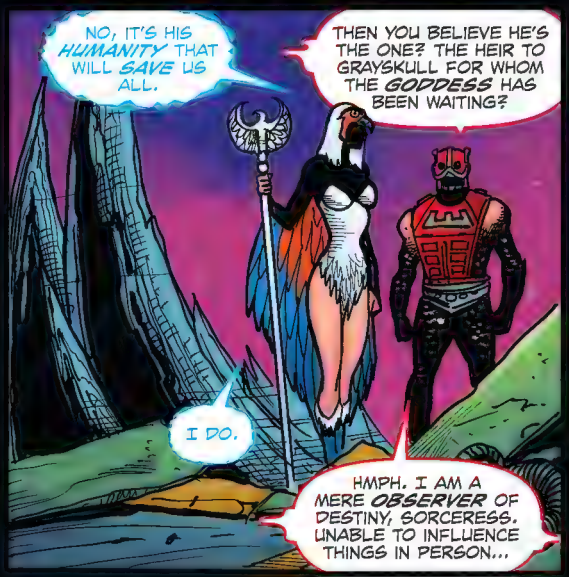
I WILL SAVE YOU!
INCONCEIVABLE.
IMPOSSIBLE.
THE BOY IS HOLDING ON WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH, REFUSING TO LET THE FUTURE COME TO PASS.
IN EVERY SINGLE MOMENT, FROM NOW TILL THE END OF TIME, ADAM IS HERE, STRUGGLING TO LIFT THIS WEIGHT AND FREE HIS FATHER.
HE'S TAPPED INTO THE POWER OF ETERNITY?
NOW YOU SEE WHY I CALLED YOU HERE.

THE EFFECT SEEMS TO BE LOCALIZED. THE FARTHER FROM ADAM, THE MORE TIME FLOWS, AS IT MUST.
A MEDIC WHO WOULD HAVE ARRIVED FAR TOO LATE WILL NOW ARRIVE IN TIME TO HEAL THE KING, SHOULD ADAM MANAGE TO FREE HIS FATHER.

WILL HE?
SHOULD HE?
KING RANDOR WAS DESTINED TO DIE HERE. HIS NEXT FEW BREATHS WERE TO BE HIS LAST.
SORCERESS, DESTINY IS NOT SOMETHING TO TRIFLE WITH...

TIME AND DESTINY HAVE BEEN TAMPERED WITH IN THIS FAMILY BEFORE...
BUT HE'S JUST A BOY. WORSE, HE'S NOT EVEN AWARE THAT HE'S DOING IT. THIS IS TOO MUCH POWER FOR A HUMAN TO POSSESS.
WE SHOULD KILL HIM.

ON THE CONTRARY, ZODAC, HIS HUMANITY IS HIS GREATEST STRENGTH. THE PROFOUND DEPTH OF LOVE FOR HIS FRIENDS AND FOR HIS FATHER.
CONSIDER, HE WOULD BE KING TOMORROW, IF ONLY HE WERE TO LET HIS FATHER DIE TONIGHT. BUT HE WON'T.
COMPARE THAT TO HIS UNCLE, WHO EVEN NOW COMMITS ATROCITIES IN THE NAME OF POWER.


NO, IT'S HIS HUMANITY THAT WILL SAVE US ALL.
THEN YOU BELIEVE HE'S THE ONE? THE HEIR TO GRAYSKULL FOR WHOM THE GODDESS HAS BEEN WAITING?
I DO.
HMPH. I AM A MERE OBSERVER OF DESTINY, SORCERESS. UNABLE TO INFLUENCE THINGS IN PERSON...

...BUT IN HIS CASE, THEN, I BELIEVE I'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION.

IN TIME I WILL GRANT YOU THE KEY TO UNLOCK YOUR GREATEST POWER, YOUNG PRINCE.
BUT FOR NOW, POWER ENOUGH TO SAVE YOUR FATHER...
I HAVE -
END

FLESH AND BLOOD

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

THIS IS THE LAIR OF THE BEAST. THE AIR IN THE CHAMBER CLINGS LIKE A PARASITE.
BUT DESPONDOS, REALM OF DARKNESS, WILL NOT BE A PRISON FOR MUCH LONGER.
ALL THE SOULS THAT HE HAS CONSUMED TO FUEL HIS POWER WRITHE AND SHIVER IN THE STONES OF THE VAULT.
THEY ARE THE DENIED, THE FORBIDDEN FROM PARADISE, THEIR LAMENTATIONS A WARNING TO ALL THOSE WHO SEEK OUT THE BEAST.
THEY KNOW THE MOMENT OF TRANSCENDENCE HAS FINALLY COME.
BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH THE INTRICATE MECHANISMS.
PRECIOUS BLOOD. THE BLOOD OF HE-MAN, THE ONE TRUE HEIR OF GRAYSKULL.
WITH A DRY SHRIEK THE CASING OPENS...
CRRREEEEEKKK

...HORDAK IS MADE FLESH AGAIN.
AND THE ETERNITY WAR BEGINS.

AAAAIIIEE!
GODDESS! G-GODDESS! I SENSE...
...B-BLASPHEMY AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL!
TEELA, THE NEW SORCERESS OF ETERNIA...
...HER SCREAMS REVERBERATE THROUGHOUT THE ANCIENT FORTRESS KNOWN AS SNAKE MOUNTAIN, WHERE OUR HEROES HAVE TAKEN REFUGE.
THE EVIL HORDE HAS CONQUERED ETERNIA AND CAPTURED CASTLE GRAYSKULL - MAKING THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE RENEGADES ON THEIR OWN WORLD.
SNAKE MOUNTAIN, ONCE THE SEAT OF SKELETOR'S POWER, HAS NOW BECOME THE SECRET STAGING GROUND FOR THEIR REBELLION AGAINST THE HORDE.
BUT THEY WILL NOT FIGHT ALONE. BECAUSE WHERE TEELA GOES, SO DO HER LEGIONS OF SNAKE MEN, WHO WORSHIP HER AS THE SORCERESS OF THEIR GODDESS SERPOS.

A SORCERESS WHO HAS JUST CALLED AN EMERGENCY WAR COUNCIL WITH THE TWIN LEADERS OF THE REBELLION...
HE-MAN, ONE-RA - DESTINY HAS TWISTED ONCE AGAIN.
WHAT HAVE YOU SEEN, TEELA? ANOTHER VISION?
DARKNESS LOOMS! EVEN BLACKER THAN OUR PRESENT NIGHTMARE. I SEE IT THROUGH THE MAGICAL FABRIC THAT CONNECTS THE WORLD...
"...HORDAK HAS ESCAPED! HORDAK HAS REJOINED HIS HORDE!"
"YOUR BLOOD, HE-MAN, IT FLOWS THROUGH HIS VEINS NOW."
"HE HAS THE POWER."
"THE POWER TO BE FLESH AGAIN."
"THE POWER TO RE-ENTER ETERNIA..."
"...AND GAINS THE SECRETS OF GRAYSKULL!"
CASTLE GRAYSKULL. HOW I HAVE MISSED YOU.
HORDAK RETURNS! LORD HORDAK RETURNS!

FLESH. I'D FORGOTTEN THE FEEL OF IT, MY HORDE. FORGOTTEN THE FREEDOM.
A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, I CAME TO CONQUER THIS WORLD, ETERNIA, AND CLAIM THIS CASTLE.
BUT KING GRAYSKULL DENIED ME. DENIED US!
WITH HIS SWORD OF POWER, HE ENTRAPPED ME IN THE DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS. ONLY SCIENCE KEPT ME ALIVE. SCIENCE AND INFINITE PATIENCE! BUT NOW...
THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL'S HEIR HAS SET ME FREE!
GIVE ME A KEEN EDGE, GRIZZLOR.
I HAVE WAITED YEARS ENOUGH. NO MORE DELAYS.
LET THE BLOOD OPEN THE WAY.
NGGH! PAIN! I HAVE MISSED THAT TOO!
GRRNNNGGGGGCCH
ACCESS AT LAST...

...THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL! THE FIRES OF ETERNITY!
THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!
GRAYSKULL WAS A THIEF. A THIEF.
HE TOOK THIS PRIMORDIAL FIRE, THIS MAGIC OF CREATION, AND LOCKED IT AWAY IN HIS CASTLE. HE KEPT IT FOR HIMSELF.
IT WAS NOT HIS DESTINY. IT WAS MINE.
THE GODDESS HAS BEEN WAITING FOR ME FOR A THOUSAND YEARS!
SHHTANG
SHTTANNG
WITH EACH STRIKE OF HAMMER ON STEEL, THE UNIVERSE SHAKES. ETERNITY CANNOT HOLD. ENTROPY AND TERROR ARE LOOSED UPON THE WORLD.
SHHTANG
SHTTANNG
UNTIL...

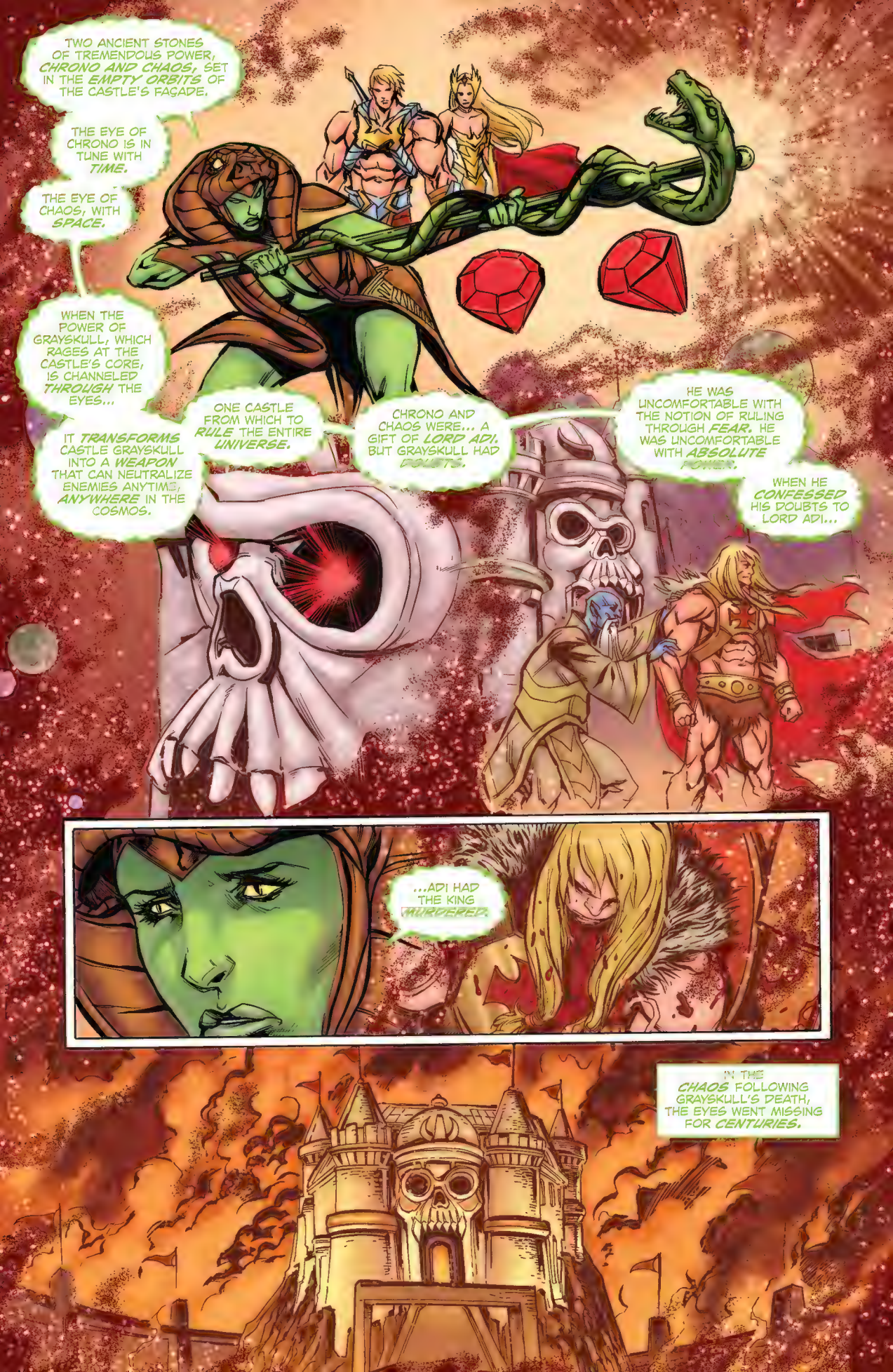
AT LAST. THE FUTURE IS *FORGED.*
LET *THE AGE OF HOROKOTH* BEGIN!
BY THE POWER OF DARKNESS INCARNATE...
SSHHKKKTOOOMMM
...I AM THE POWER!
AND WITH THIS POWER, WE SHALL HUNT FOR THE MEANS TO RULE THE UNIVERSE, MY HORDE!
WE SHALL HUNT FOR *THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL!*
"...ADAM, ADORA, SOMETHING *TERRIBLE* HAS HAPPENED..."

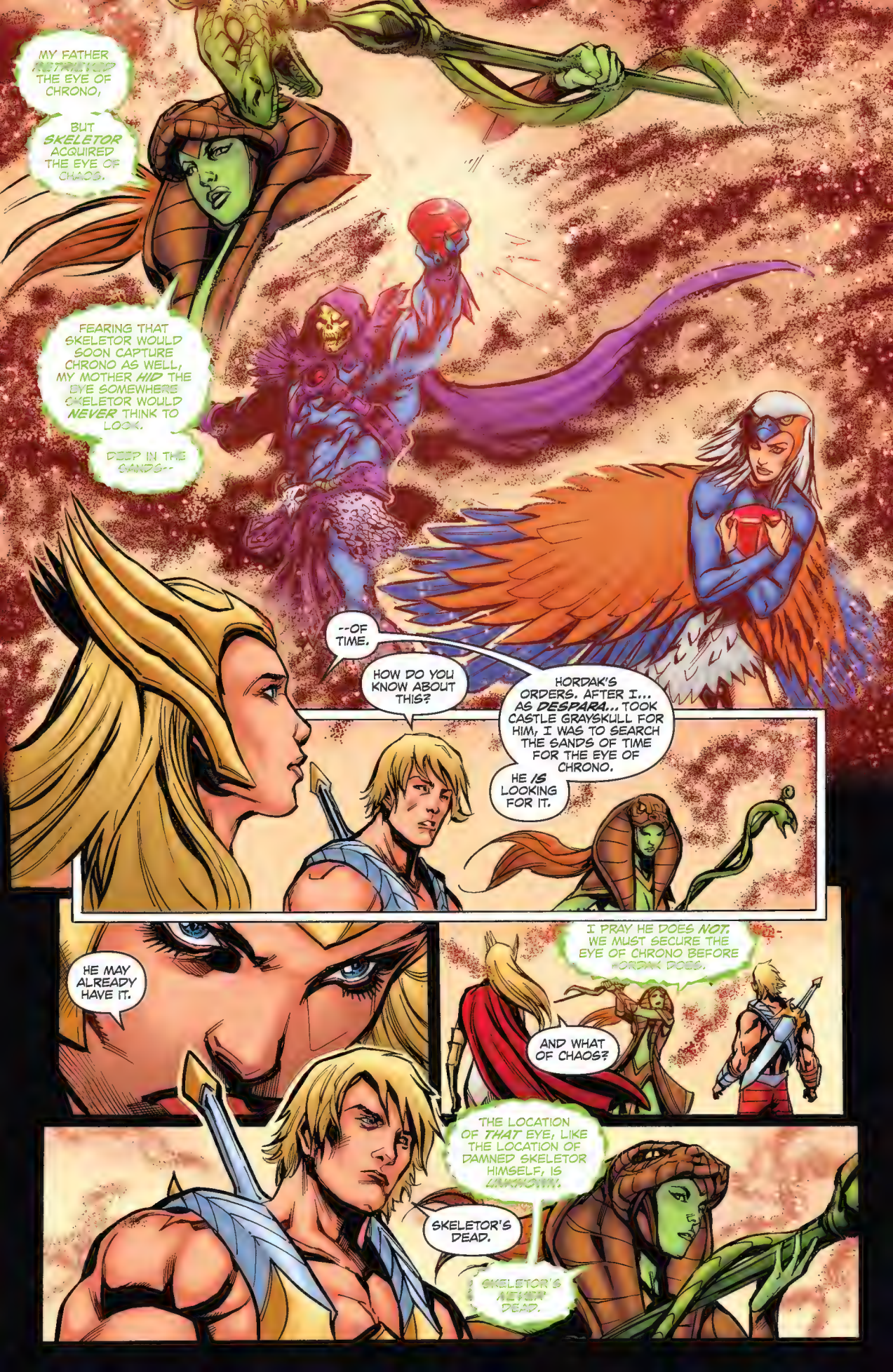
...THE HORDE OCCUPATION OF OUR WORLD HAS TAKEN A DARK, IRREVOCABLE TURN.
CREATOR'S BREATH...
EVERY DAY, MORE AND MORE ETERNIANS ARRIVE AT SNAKE MOUNTAIN SWELLING THE RANKS OF THE RESISTANCE.
SOME HAVE AN EASIER TIME ADJUSTING TO LIFE HERE THAN OTHERS...
I HEARD MY DAUGHTER CRY OUT!
LET ME GO TO HER! LET ME SEE HER!
I DEMAND--
UGHNN!
IT IS FORBIDDEN TO APPROACH THE SSSSORCERESS OF SSSSERPOS WITHOUT HER CONSSSSENT!

DON'T YOU REPTILES KNOW WHO I AM?
WE DO, "MAN-AT-ARMSSSS". DO YOU NOT KNOW WHO WE ARE?
RATTLOR.
KOBRA KHAN.
LASHOR.
SSSQUEEZE. WE ARE THE GENERALSSS OF HER ARMY.
AND NO MAMMAL APPROACHESSS HER WITHOUT OUR PERMISSSSION.
I'M HER DAMN FATHER! I'VE NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO SEE HER ONCE SINCE I ARRIVED!
SSSSHE IS IN COUNSSSSEL WITH HE-MAN AND SSSSHE-RA.
WE WILL SSSTOP YOU IF YOU PERSSSISSST.
AND BY "SSSTOP YOU, KHAN MEANSSSS...
.... IT'SSSS BEEN A WHILE SSSSSINCE OUR LASSSST MEAL.
OH, REALLY?
LET'S SEE HOW THIS GOES, SHALL WE?

ABOVE...
ALL MY LIFE, I'VE FOUGHT SKELETOR, THINKING HE WAS THE GREATEST EVIL THE UNIVERSE HAD EVER SPAWNED.
SO NAÏVE...
SKELETOR WAS JUST A PAWN. HORDAK IS THE TRUE DEMON.
HE TOOK MY UNCLE FROM ME. HE TOOK MY SISTER. HE TOOK ETERNIA AND CASTLE GRAYSKULL. AND NOW, HE'S TAKEN MY VERY BLOOD.
WHAT DO I HAVE LEFT?
RAGE. SOMETIMES THAT'S ALL WE HAVE LEFT.
NO, WE HAVE OUR SWORDS. THE SWORD OF POWER AND THE SWORD OF PROTECTION THAT KING GRAYSKULL FORGED FOR US.
THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL DEFEATED HORDAK BEFORE. IT WILL DO SO AGAIN.
IF ONLY IT WERE THAT SIMPLE, ADAM. THERE'S MORE TO THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL THAN YOU KNOW...

LONG AGO, DURING THE ERA OF KING GRAYSKULL...
GRAYSKULL'S FAR-SEERS WARNED OF HORDAK'S IMPENDING INVASION.
IN ANTICIPATION, GRAYSKULL FORGED THE SWORDS OF POWER AND PROTECTION. TWIN SWORDS THAT COULD TAP INTO THE MYSTICAL POWER OF GRAYSKULL.
BUT LORD ADI, LEADER OF GRAYSKULL'S COUNCIL OF ELDERS, HAD BIGGER PLANS.
ADI. GRAYSKULL'S MOST *TRUSTED* FRIEND. AND *BETRAYER.*
HE CONVINCED THE KING TO MAKE *THE CASTLE ITSELF* A WEAPON.
HENCE, *THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.*
THE WHAT--?


TWO ANCIENT STONES OF TREMENDOUS POWER, CHRONO AND CHAOS, SET IN THE EMPTY ORBITS OF THE CASTLE'S FAÇADE.
THE EYE OF CHRONO IS IN TUNE WITH TIME.
THE EYE OF CHAOS, WITH SPACE.
WHEN THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, WHICH RAGES AT THE CASTLE'S CORE, IS CHANNELED THROUGH THE EYES...
IT TRANSFORMS CASTLE GRAYSKULL INTO A WEAPON THAT CAN NEUTRALIZE ENEMIES ANYTIME, ANYWHERE IN THE COSMOS.
ONE CASTLE FROM WHICH TO RULE THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.
CHRONO AND CHAOS WERE... A GIFT OF LORD ADI. BUT GRAYSKULL HAD DOUBTS.
HE WAS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE NOTION OF RULING THROUGH FEAR. HE WAS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH ABSOLUTE POWER.
WHEN HE CONFESSED HIS DOUBTS TO LORD ADI...
...ADI HAD THE KING MURDERED.
IN THE CHAOS FOLLOWING GRAYSKULL'S DEATH, THE EYES WENT MISSING FOR CENTURIES.


MY FATHER RETRIEVED THE EYE OF CHRONO,
BUT SKELETOR ACQUIRED THE EYE OF CHAOS.
FEARING THAT SKELETOR WOULD SOON CAPTURE CHRONO AS WELL, MY MOTHER HID THE EYE SOMEWHERE SKELETOR WOULD NEVER THINK TO LOOK.
DEEP IN THE SANDS--
--OF TIME.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS?
HORDAK'S ORDERS. AFTER I... AS DESPARA... TOOK CASTLE GRAYSKULL FOR HIM, I WAS TO SEARCH THE SANDS OF TIME FOR THE EYE OF CHRONO.
HE IS LOOKING FOR IT.
HE MAY ALREADY HAVE IT.
I PRAY HE DOES NOT. WE MUST SECURE THE EYE OF CHRONO BEFORE HORDAK DOES.
AND WHAT OF CHAOS?
THE LOCATION OF THAT EYE, LIKE THE LOCATION OF DAMNED SKELETOR HIMSELF, IS UNKNOWN.
SKELETOR'S DEAD.
SKELETOR'S NEVER DEAD.

AND IF WE OBTAIN THE EYES, WHAT *THEN?*
WE *USE* THEM AGAINST HORDAK?
NO. NOT HORDAK. NOT *ANYONE.*
NO GOOD CAN COME OF THAT.
THE EYES, ONCE FOUND, MUST BE *DESTROYED.*
GRAYSKULL WAS RIGHT. THIS IS TOO MUCH POWER FOR *ANYONE* TO HOLD.
I DON'T TRUST YOU, SORCERESS!
IT'S THANKS TO YOU THAT HORDAK HAS ADAM'S BLOOD!
GRAYSKULL SHOULD HAVE LEARNED TO TRUST HIS INSTINCTS SOONER! AND SO SHOULD YOU!

SNASSHH
GET OFF ME! I WILL SEE MY DAUGHTER!
YOU DON'T HAVE PERMISSSSSSION!
WHAT? MAN-AT-ARMS? WHAT THE--
UGGGHHSSS!
GET OFF ME!
AND YOU!
UGHNNKKK!

GET AWAY FROM HIM!
TEELA! CALL YOUR MONSTERS BACK!
HE'SSSSS NOT WELCOME HERE!
NOT WELCOME, HUH?
HOW'S THIS FOR PERMISSION?
SMAKKKKKK
HUFF-- HUFF---
TEELA, DAUGHTER. ARE YOU WELL?
THE CRYSTAL SEA.

WELL, OKAY THEN.
NICE WORK OUT, GENERALS. QUITE GOT MY BLOOD PUMPING.
DON'T BOTHER GETTING UP. I'LL SEE MYSELF OUT.
REMEMBER TO DRESS UP WARM, CHILD.
IT'S COLD HERE IN THE DARK HEMISPHERE.
YES, DADDY.
WE ARE A FAMILY.
AND FAMILY IS A STRENGTH THAT DEMONS FEAR.

LET HORDAK KNOW FEAR.
WE WILL FIND THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.
WE WILL TAKE BACK THE CASTLE, AND THEN ALL OF ETERNIA.
LET THE WAR BEGIN.
LET IT BEGIN AND END.

WELL, WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE THE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BUSY WHILE I WAS AWAY.
THE TIME HAS COME, I SEE...
...AND I HAVE ONE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE AT LEAST.

IF MY ENEMIES WANT WAR...
CRY HAVOC- THEY SHALL HAVE IT!

LIGHT AND DARK

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

FROM THE EVER-TWILIGHT OF ETERNIA'S DARK HEMISPHERE, AN ARMY MARCHES TO WAR.
THE FIERCE SNAKE MEN, WARRIORS OF SERPOS, BOUND IN LOYALTY TO THE SORCERESS.
EVERY DIVISION HAS MOBILIZED. THE LIGHT TROOPS, THE ARCHERS, THE SPEAR-COMPANIES, THE HEAVY FOOT, EVEN THE PRETERNIAN BEASTS OF THE SAURIAN CAVALRY.
THE SCANNERS AND DETECTORS OF HORDAK'S VILE HORDE CANNOT PENETRATE THE DARK HEMISPHERE'S MYSTIC VEIL.
THE EVIL ONE CANNOT SEE THEM COMING.
BUT HE SUSPECTS. SPIES REPORT THAT HORDE ARMIES ARE GATHERING ON THE BORDER TO ASSAULT AND CONQUER THE DARK HEMISPHERE.

SO HE-MAN INTENDS TO STRIKE FIRST AND FAST.

AT DAYBREAK, HIS ARMY WILL CROSS INTO THE LIGHT AND RETAKE MOUNT ZOAR.

BUT IT IS A *GREAT* RISK.

THE **MOMENT** THEY ENTER THE LIGHT HEMISPHERE, THEY WILL BE VISIBLE TO AND **VULNERABLE** TO ALL HORDE TECHNOLOGY.

INCLUDING THE DEVASTATING ORBITAL DISRUPTER.

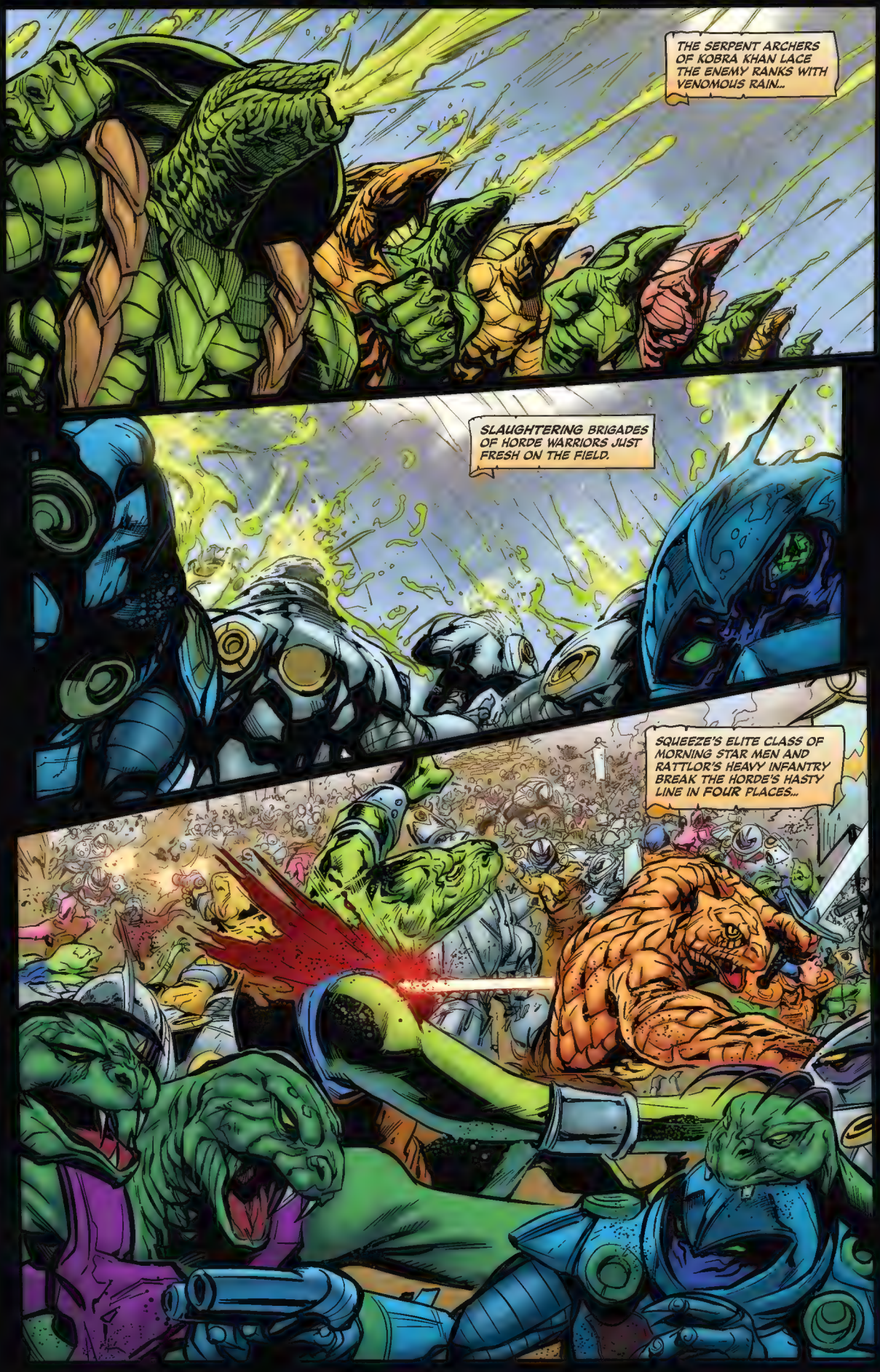
SNAKE MOUNTAIN. TWO NIGHTS EARLIER...
"THE ORBITAL DISRUPTER IS OUR BIGGEST PROBLEM."
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, LORD.
I'LL HAVE IT NEUTRALIZED BY THE TIME YOUR HOST MOVES INTO THE DAYLIGHT.
THAT WILL BE NO SMALL UNDERTAKING, DUNCAN.
I'M MAN-AT-ARMS, MY LORD. IT'S MY KIND OF WORK.
BESIDES, I HAVE THIS.
ONE OF THE HORDE'S DIMENSIONAL TRANSPONDERS. A TELEPORT DEVICE.
IT SAVED ME FROM THE DISRUPTER AT SARNSCEPTOR. IT'LL SERVE ME WELL AGAIN NOW.
BUT THE MISSION IS FRAUGHT.
NO ETERNIAN HAS EVER DONE WHAT YOU PROPOSE TO D--
TRUST ME.

I'VE MADE SOME MODIFICATIONS TO ROBOTO FOR THE MISSION.
I'M NOT TAKING CHANCES, ADAM. YOU KNOW MY MOTTO--
"ALWAYS BE PREPARED."
DUNCAN, TELL ME ABOUT TEELA.
WHAT DID SHE MEAN WHEN SHE SAID, "THE CRYSTAL SEA"?
THAT? AHHH... WHEN SHE WAS NINE SHE RAN AWAY FROM HOME.
SHE WAS DESPERATE TO LEARN ABOUT HER MOTHER.
AT THE SORCERESS'S REQUEST, I'D ALWAYS KEPT HER MOTHER'S IDENTITY HIDDEN FROM HER.
TEELA RAN AWAY TO CONSULT THE FABLED ORACLE OF THE CRYSTAL SEA.
OF COURSE, SHE WAS NINE. SHE NEVER FOUND IT.
SHE WOUND UP STRANDED ON AN ISLAND IN THE CRYSTAL SEA FOR NINETY DAYS, ALL ALONE.
BUT SHE SURVIVED. SHE REMEMBERED THE THINGS I'D TAUGHT HER, THE TRAINING I'D GIVEN HER.
ALWAYS BE PREPARED.
SHE SURVIVED FOR NINETY DAYS UNTIL I RESCUED HER.

SHE'S A SURVIVOR, MY DAUGHTER, THROUGH AND THROUGH.
AND SHE LOVES YOU WITH ALL HER HEART. ALWAYS WILL.
YOU'RE CARRYING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD ON YOUR SHOULDERS, MY LORD.
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU RELINQUISHED THE POWER? SINCE YOU WERE LAST... ADAM?
A WHILE. I CAN'T STOP BEING HE-MAN NOW, DUNCAN. I CAN'T TRANSFORM BACK.
WE'RE AT WAR. I HAVE TO STAY STRONG.
FOR MY MEN. FOR ETERNIA.
YOU'RE THE STRONGEST MAN I'VE EVER KNOWN. NOT BECAUSE OF THE SWORD OR THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL.
BECAUSE OF YOU.
GIVE THE HORDE HELL, YOU HEAR ME...
"...GIVE THEM HELL, KING ADAM."
WARRIORS OF SERPOS!
ATTACK!

THE GROUND ITSELF QUAKES AS THE ARMY CHARGES FORWARD.
TAKEN BY SURPRISE, THE HORDE DEFENDERS OF MOUNT ZOAR PANIC...

WHAT IS THIS, DYLAMUG? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT, LORD MANTENNA!
IT IS HE-MAN, AT THE HEAD OF AN ARMY FROM THE DARK HEMISPHERE!
TO ARMS! PRIME YOUR WEAPONS!
MEET THEM! DRIVE THEM BACK!
BUT THE WARRIORS OF SERPOS HAVE SURPRISE ON THEIR SIDE, AS HE-MAN INTENDED.
THEY CRUSH THE OUTER PICKETS.


THE SERPENT ARCHERS OF KOBRA KHAN LACE THE ENEMY RANKS WITH VENOMOUS RAIN...
SLAUGHTERING BRIGADES OF HORDE WARRIORS JUST FRESH ON THE FIELD.
SQUEEZE'S ELITE CLASS OF MORNING STAR MEN AND RATTLOR'S HEAVY INFANTRY BREAK THE HORDE'S HASTY LINE IN FOUR PLACES...

...ALLOWING LASHOR'S SAURIAN CAVALRY A CLEAR PATH TO CHARGE.
FOR ETERNIA! STRIKE! STRIKE!
NO QUARTER!
THE EARTH SHIVERS. A TUMULT FILLS THE AIR.
AND HIGH, HIGH ABOVE, IN THE SILENCE OF ORBIT...
...A NEW STAR APPEARS.

TELEPORT COMPLETE. THE HORDE TRANSPONDER GOT US INTO ORBIT.
YOU ALL RIGHT, ROBOTO?
TO FUNCTION AS YOUR SPACE-ARMOR? OF COURSE.
WHY WOULD I NOT BE?
WELL, THIS IS QUITE A MOMENT.
WE'RE THE FIRST ETERNIANS TO SEE OUR WORLD FROM SPACE.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL. WORTH FIGHTING FOR. WORTH DYING FOR.
ORBITAL DISRUPTER DETECTED.
FIRE THE ATTITUDE THRUSTERS, ROBOTO.
TAKE US IN.

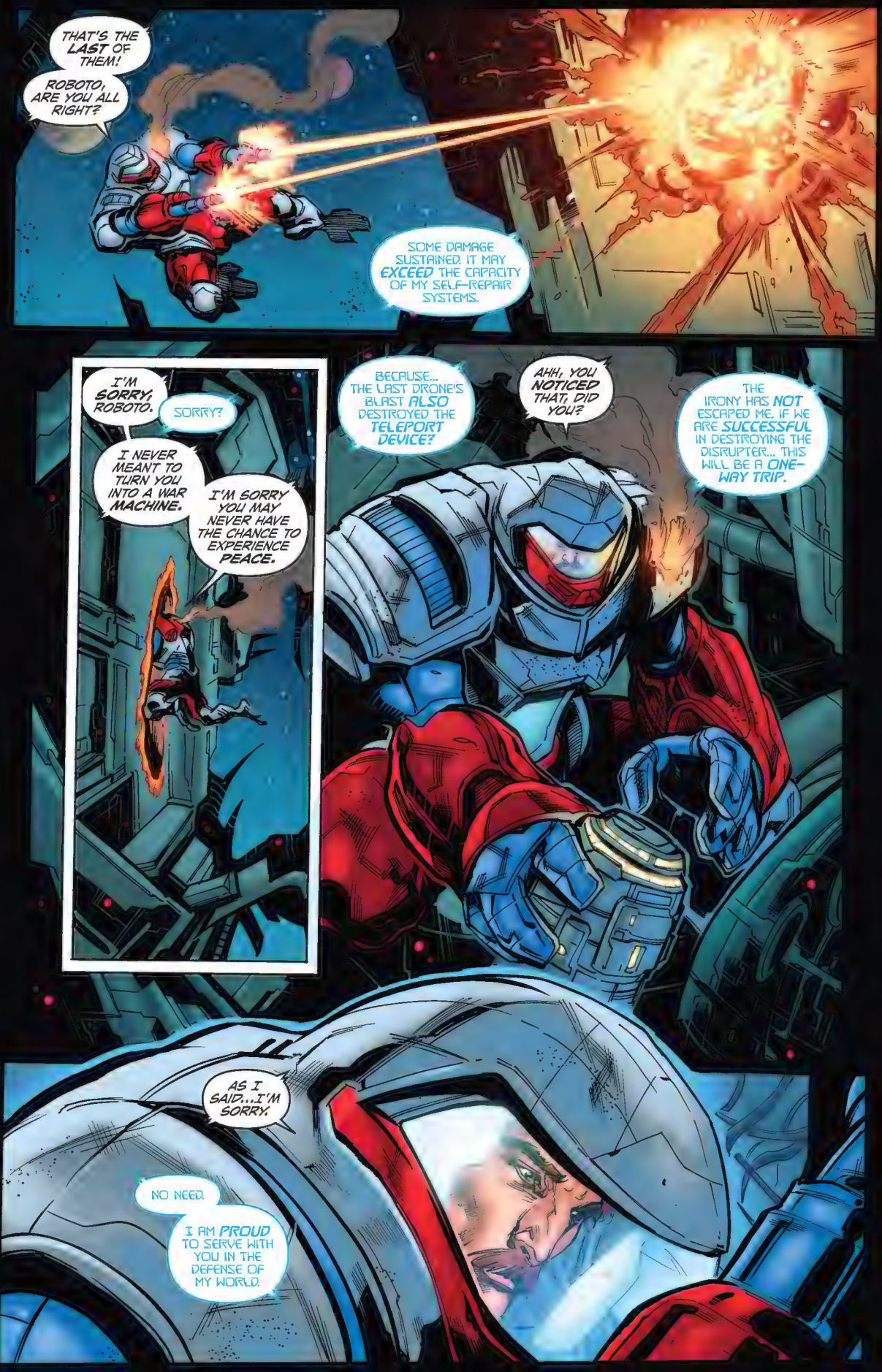
THEY'RE CRUSHING US!
CURSE THE AGES! RELEASE SPYDOR!
RELEASE SPYDOR!

BY SSSERPOS! NO!
RATTLOR! GET BEHIND ME!
THIS BEAST IS MINE!

UGHHNN!
HE-MAN HAS ENGAGED SPYDOR, LORD MANTENNA.
SPYDOR WILL PREVAIL. EVEN AGAINST THAT ETERNIAN BRUTE.
GNNH!
I DON'T NEED MY SWORD!
I'LL RIP YOU APART WITH MY HANDS!
BUT WE WILL TAKE NO CHANCES.
ORDER THE ORBITAL DISRUPTER TO TARGET THE ENEMY HOST.
IF SPYDOR FALLS, WE FIRE THE DISRUPTER AND LEVEL OUR ENEMY.
AT ONCE, LORD MANTENNA!

GENTLY DOES IT, ROBOTO.
LET'S MANEUVER OUR WAY CLOSE TO THE NEAREST ACCESS PORT.
ADJUSTING FOR DRIFT.
WHOOAA!
DAMNATION! THE WEAPON'S ARMING!
CONFIRMED. THE DISRUPTER IS CHARGING TO FIRE.
WE HAVE TO DISABLE THIS THING FAST! ROBOTO, WE--
AHHH!
BEWARE! ENEMY FIRE!
HORDE ORBITAL DRONES! WE ARE DETECTED AND ASSAULTED!
TARGET THEM! POWER TO THE SLEEVE GUNS!
AT YOUR DISCRETION.

YOU WILL NOT BEST ME, MONSTER!
RAPID FIRE!
GNNHHHK!
UGHHNNK!
SKWEEEEEKKK!


THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM!
ROBOTO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SOME DAMAGE SUSTAINED. IT MAY EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF MY SELF-REPAIR SYSTEMS.
I'M SORRY, ROBOTO.
SORRY?
I NEVER MEANT TO TURN YOU INTO A WAR MACHINE.
I'M SORRY YOU MAY NEVER HAVE THE CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE PEACE.
BECAUSE... THE LAST DRONE'S BLAST ALSO DESTROYED THE TELEPORT DEVICE?
AHH, YOU NOTICED THAT, DID YOU?
THE IRONY HAS NOT ESCAPED ME. IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN DESTROYING THE DISRUPTER... THIS WILL BE A ONE-WAY TRIP.
AS I SAID...I'M SORRY.
NO NEED.
I AM PROUD TO SERVE WITH YOU IN THE DEFENSE OF MY WORLD.

THE CHARGES ARE RIGGED.
ACTIVATING DETONATION SEQUENCE.
BIP BIP BIP
YOU'RE FINISHED!
KEE-ARRGH!!
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!

VICTORY!
MOUNT ZOAR IS OURS!
FIRST BLOOD IS OURS!
LET HORDAK TREMBLE!
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!
HE-MAN!
FTOOOOH
THE DISRUPTER!
DUNCAN, YOU ARE A WONDER!
THE MOMENT YOU ARE SAFELY BACK ON SOLID GROUND...

"... WE WILL CELEBRATE THIS GREAT DAY!"
ROBOTO, BRACE FOR--
UGHHNN!
THRUSTERS HAVE FAILED!
ROBOTO! WE'RE FALLING!
ROBOTO?

TIME AND FIRE

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

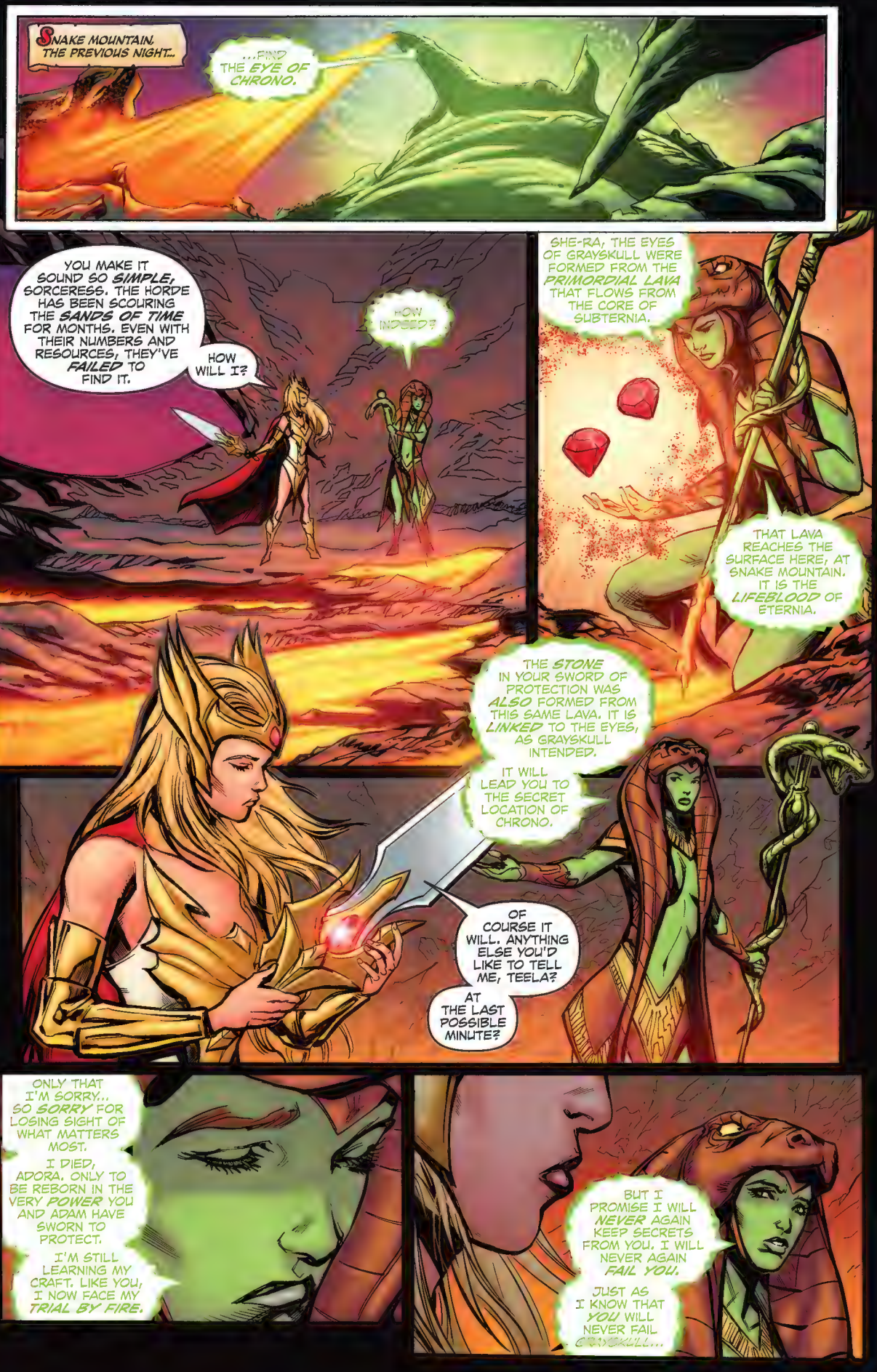
Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

"THE MISSION IS
STRAIGHT FORWARD..."


SNAKE MOUNTAIN. THE PREVIOUS NIGHT...
...FIND THE EYE OF CHRONO.
YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO SIMPLE, SORCERESS. THE HORDE HAS BEEN SCOURING THE SANDS OF TIME FOR MONTHS. EVEN WITH THEIR NUMBERS AND RESOURCES, THEY'VE FAILED TO FIND IT.
HOW WILL I?
HOW INDEED?
SHE-RA, THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL WERE FORMED FROM THE PRIMORDIAL LAVA THAT FLOWS FROM THE CORE OF SUBTERNIA.
THAT LAVA REACHES THE SURFACE HERE, AT SNAKE MOUNTAIN. IT IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF ETERNIA.
THE STONE IN YOUR SWORD OF PROTECTION WAS ALSO FORMED FROM THIS SAME LAVA. IT IS LINKED TO THE EYES, AS GRAYSKULL INTENDED.
IT WILL LEAD YOU TO THE SECRET LOCATION OF CHRONO.
OF COURSE IT WILL. ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL ME, TEELA?
AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MINUTE?
ONLY THAT I'M SORRY... SO SORRY FOR LOSING SIGHT OF WHAT MATTERS MOST.
I DIED, ADORA, ONLY TO BE REBORN IN THE VERY POWER YOU AND ADAM HAVE SWORN TO PROTECT.
I'M STILL LEARNING MY CRAFT. LIKE YOU, I NOW FACE MY TRIAL BY FIRE.
BUT I PROMISE I WILL NEVER AGAIN KEEP SECRETS FROM YOU. I WILL NEVER AGAIN FAIL YOU.
JUST AS I KNOW THAT YOU WILL NEVER FAIL GRAYSKULL...

"...YOU ARE SHE-RA..."
BE READY, WIND RAIDERS...THE ENEMY HAUNTS THIS WASTELAND!
"...YOU ARE..."
"...THE PRINCESS OF POWER!"
ENGAGE THE HORDE!

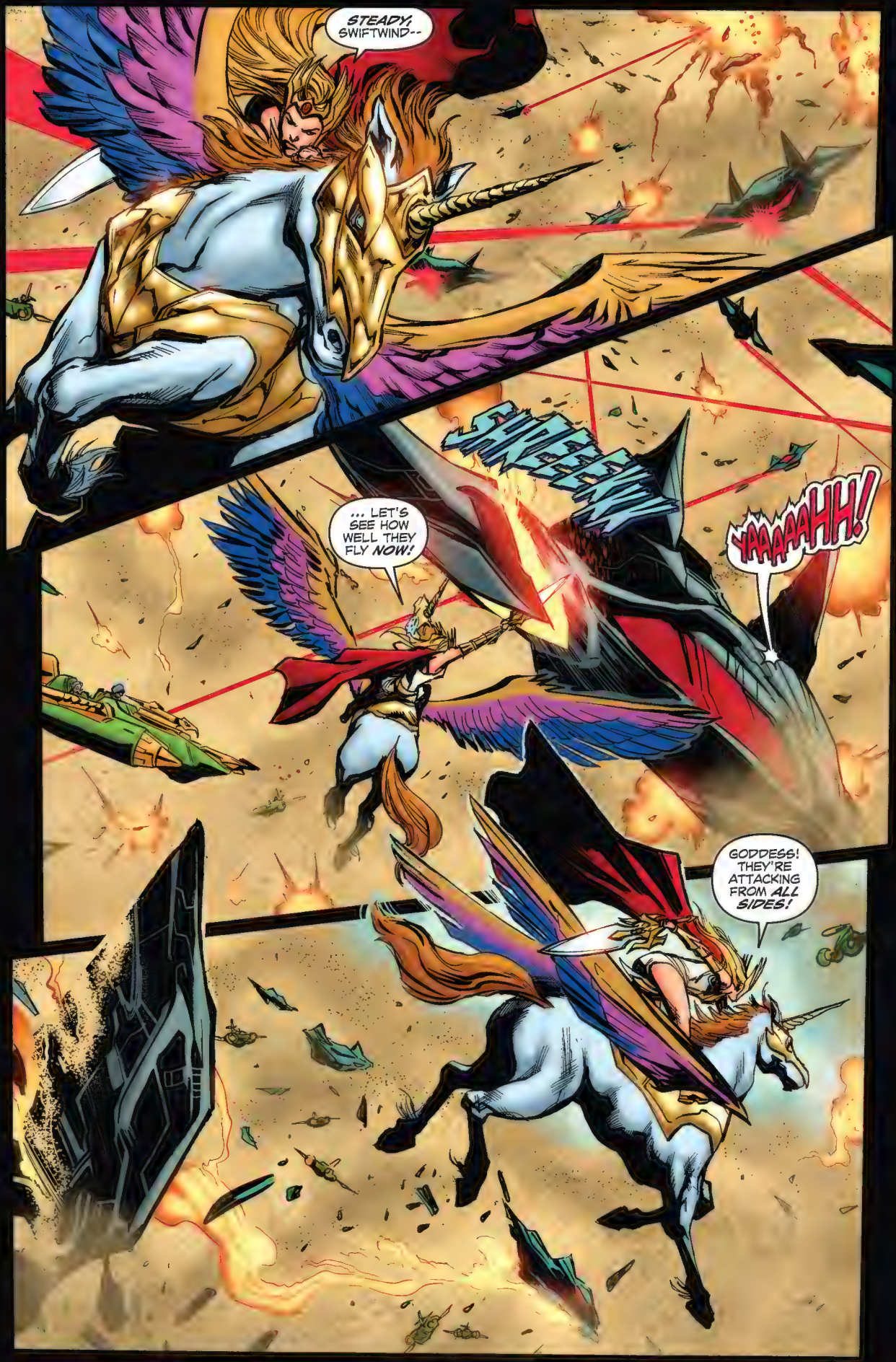
YOU HEARD SHE-RA! *TAKE THEM DOWN!*

THE ONE CALLED *VULTAK* IS MINE!

FOR ETERNIA! *FOR THE SORCERESS!*

FOR THE HONOR OF GRAYSKULL!

AH, ANOTHER AVIAN! I HAVE KILLED FIFTY OF YOUR KIND SO FAR! I AM UNIMPRESSED!
YOU'LL PAY FOR EACH OF THOSE SOULS, MONSTER. I AM STRATOS—
--THE KING OF AVION!!
BY THE CURSED STARS! WIND RAIDERS AND STRATOS...
... THEY HAVE BEEN SENT TO THWART OUR MISSION!
AND WITH THEM, NO LESS THAN SHE-RA HERSELF!
SHE-RA? HE-MAN'S GIRLFRIEND, I PRESUME?
SISTER, YOU IMBECILE! TWIN SISTER! IF OUR SPY REPORTS SPEAK TRUTH!
ERKK!
I WILL QUICKLY SLAY THE GLORIOUS "PRINCESS"!
LORD HORDAK WILL PRAISE ME FOR MY SERVICE, SCORPIA!
CURSE YOU, CATRA! NO! I SAW HER FIRST!
SHE'S MINE!
IDIOT! YOU SPOILED MY AIM!


STEADY, SWIFTWIND--
SHREEK!
... LET'S SEE HOW WELL THEY FLY NOW!
YAAAAAHH!
GODDESS! THEY'RE ATTACKING FROM ALL SIDES!

HAVE A CARE, MY LADY!
THE HORDE IS OUT FOR BLOOD!
YES! YOUR BLOOD!
FIGHT ON, WIND RAIDERS!
THEY SHALL NOT BEST US!
SHKOOOMMM
SHE'S CUTTING A SWATH THROUGH OUR FIGHTER SQUADRON!
SHE'D BE DEAD ALREADY IF YOU HADN'T GOT IN MY WAY!
GUNSHIP! COME ABOUT!
DIRECT ALL TURRET GUNS AT THE ETERNIAN!

ON! ON! TAKE ME RIGHT TO IT!
THAT GUNSHIP IS THE REAL MENACE, SWIFTWIND...
...AND IT'S HELL-BENT ON ENDING ME!
ARRGGH!
SHE-RA! BE CAREFUL--!
SO EASILY DISTRACTED, KING OF AVION?
UGHHKK!
YOU SHOULD LOOK AFTER YOURSELF!
UGHHHNNK!

ONE CHANCE--!
SHE'S COMING AT US!
BLAST HER! BLAST HER!
NGHHH!
SHHRRAAKK
OOOM

MMHHFF!
NHH!
NICE SAVE, SWIFTWIND!
THE GUNSHIP IS DOWN!
FIGHTERS! RETREAT! VULTAK COMMANDS!
RUNNING FROM THE FIGHT, EH?

FOR AVION!!
THWWNNKKK!
UGHHHH!
SHE-RA! THEY'RE FLEEING!
THE HORDE SQUADRON IS DEFEATED!
SHE-RA?
WHERE IS SHE?

SET ME DOWN, SWIFTWIND...
THE STONE IS GLOWING LIKE A FIREBRAND! IT SENSES SOMETHING!
CHRONO IS CLOSE!
KRAK-THOOM

EVERYTHING HAS ITS DAY IN THE SUN...
CREATOR'S BREATH! THE SANDS OF TIME GIVE UP THEIR SECRETS!
...AND WHEN IT BECOMES MERE LEGEND, WHEN IT IS FORGOTTEN, WHEN IT HAS SLIPPED INTO THE SANDS OF TIME...
...LET IT BE SO FORTUNATE AS TO FIND ITS FINAL RESTING PLACE HERE. THIS FINAL SANCTUARY...
...THIS TEMPLE OF THE SUN.
THE EYE OF CHRONO MUST BE HERE!

STAY HERE, SWIFTWIND.
I WILL RECOVER CHRONO AND--
YOU'LL RECOVER NOTHING!
CATRA! SCORPIA!
THANK YOU FOR POINTING THE WAY, SHE-RA. THE HORDE IS INDEBTED TO YOU.
AND WE ARE HONORED. YOU KNOW OUR NAMES.
YOU RECOGNIZE THE WARRIORS WHO WILL END YOUR MISERABLE LIFE.
OF COURSE. I KNOW YOU WELL.
WE ONCE SERVED TOGETHER.
WE... WE DID?
BACK THEN, SCORPIA, TO MY SHAME, I WAS KNOWN AS...
...DESPARA.

NOW DO YOU DARE FACE ME?
DESPARA? SHE WAS DESPARA?
THAT'S TWICE ENOUGH REASON TO KILL HER!
OH, I LOATHE DESPARA MORE THAN ANYTHING!
DIE, DESPARA! DIE!
NGHHK!
NOT TODAY!
DESPARA IS LONG GONE...

...TODAY YOU FACE THE POWER OF SHE-RA!
LIGHGHKK!
THAT'S TAKEN THE STING OUT OF IT...
ARE YOU GOING TO BE STUPID ENOUGH TO TRY AGAIN, CATRA?
SCORPIA WAS ALWAYS WEAK...
...YOU'LL FIND THE SPIRIT OF CATRA...

...RATHER MORE DEADLY!
SPIRITS OF ETERNIA!
KAAARRR
NYAAAH!
GAAAAH!
GRAYSKULL...

SHKOOMM
...PROTECT ME!
THE FORCES OF HORDAK CONTINUE TO UNDERESTIMATE ME...
DO THEY, DESPARA?
WHO'S THERE?
NHAHAHAHAHA!
OH, DESPARA... DESPARA MY POOR CHILD...

...YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE JOINED YOUR PATHETIC BROTHER AND TAKEN UP ARMS AGAINST ME.
NEVER.
HORDAK!

THREATS AND PROMISES

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

TIME TO DIE, LITTLE, WAYWARD DESPARA.
TIME TO DIE.

I WILL NEVER SUBMIT TO YOU...
ETERNIANS! TARGET THAT MONSTER, HORDAK!
TAKE HIM DOWN!
AS YOU COMMAND, LORD STRATOS!
AGHH!
AIIEEEEE!
"TAKE ME DOWN"?
ME?
UGH!
ARGHHH!
SHHHRRRAAKKOOM

DON'T MAKE THREATS, KING STRATOS, THAT YOU CANNOT DELIVER.
GOOD ADVICE.
I DON'T MAKE THREATS. I MAKE PROMISES.
YOU WILL BE DESTROYED.
DESPARA?
I AM NOT DESPARA, CREATURE.
NOR AM I ADORA ANY MORE.
I AM NOT THE LITTLE GIRL YOU CAN MOLD AT YOUR WHIM.
I AM
SHE-RA
I AM YOUR DOOM!

HALF A WORLD AWAY, AT MOUNT ZOAR...
HOLD STILL, DAMMIT!
NGHHHSSS!
WORK YOUR HEALING MAGIC, MENDOR, PLEASE.
RATTLOR IS A SKILLED WARRIOR. HIS DEATH WOULD ROB US OF A GOOD FIELD OFFICER.
DAH! I'VE NEVER TREATED A SNAKE BEFORE.
HOLD STILL!
GNHHSSSS!
THERE. THE WOUND IS CLOSED.
REST IS WHAT HE NEEDS NOW.
MY THANKS. WITHOUT YOUR MINISTRATIONS, OUR LOSSES WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH GREATER.
GNNHHHH...
AND TO THINK... YOU WERE VICTORIOUS.
IMAGINE HOW MUCH YOU'LL NEED ME WHEN WE ACTUALLY LOSE A BATTLE.
I KNOW I WILL BE ASKING A LOT OF YOU OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, MENDOR--
AH, ADAM...

...I DELIVERED YOU INTO THIS WORLD. I'VE WATCHED YOU GROW INTO A KING.
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN'T ASK OF ME.
MAMMEL-SSSSSS. HSSSS WOULD HAVE LET ME DIE...
...HE WOULD HAVE SSSSEEN YOUR CONSSSSERN FOR ME, FOR ALL OF USSSS, ASSS WEAKNESSSS.
WELL, THERE'S GRATITUDE! HE WANTED YOUR LIFE SAVED, YOU COLD-BLOODED WRETCH!
IT PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, BUT ADAM ACTUALLY CARES ABOUT YOUR WELFARE!
NO, DOCTOR.... YOU MISSSSUNDERSSSTAND...
HSSSS WASSSS WRONG.
I HAVE WITNESSSED HE-MAN'SSSS SSSTRENGTH ON THE BATTLEFIELD. I KNOW HE WILL CARRY USSSSS TO VICTORY.
I DO NOT FOLLOW HE-MAN BECAUSSSE IT ISSS THE WILL OF THE GODDESSSSSS.
I FOLLOW BECAUSSSE I CHOOSSSE TO.
MY KING.
MY FRIEND. REST WELL.

WELL, I FEEL LIKE A FOOL.
THE LOYALTY YOU ARE EARNING IS EXTRAORDINARY.
WE FIGHT FOR THE SAME CAUSE, ETERNIA.
YOU HEARD RATTLOR. IT'S MORE THAN THAT.
YOU ARE A TRUE KING, ADAM. UNDERSTAND HOW HIGHLY THESE UNLIKELY ALLIES REGARD YOU.
I DO, AND I WILL.
APPRECIATE THAT... AND RESPECT IT.
WE'LL KEEP THIS ARMY TOGETHER, MENDOR, BODY AND SPIRIT.
YOU HEAL, AND I'LL INSPIRE.
ETERNIA MAY YET PULL THROUGH, DOCTOR.
THE PROGNOSIS IS GOOD.
I'LL CONTINUE MY TRIAGE.
I MUST GO TO THE SORCERESS...
"...TEELA AND I MUST PLAN THE NEXT MOVE."

YOU THINK YOU CAN BETTER ME?
NGGFF!
I NOW WIELD THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, FLESHLING....
... THE VERY POWER YOU FIGHT SO HARD TO PROTECT!
AHHH!
I HAVE YOUR POWER!
UGHHHJKK!

KRANNNCHHH
NNHHH...
NHH...

TEELA? SORCERESS?
TEELA, I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR FATHER.
I HAVE SCOUT PARTIES OUT SEARCHING FOR DUNCAN AND--
MY TEARS ARE NOT FOR HIM.
I KNOW IN MY HEART THAT MY FATHER IS STILL ALIVE.
THEN WHAT?
I WEEP FOR THE GODDESS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE AGE OF HOROKOTH IS UPON US.
HOROKOTH? WHAT--
THE MOTHER GODDESS IS THE SOURCE AND HEART OF ALL CREATION.
SHE IS THE FIRE FROM WHICH OUR UNIVERSE WAS BORN. THE LAST RELIC SPARK OF CREATION NOW RAGES IN THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL. THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE FIGHTING TO PROTECT.
BUT CAN ANY ONE MAN TRULY CLAIM THE GODDESS' LIGHT AS HIS OWN?

WE ALL SEE THE GODDESS IN OUR OWN IMAGE...
IN THE BEGINNING, THE SNAKEMEN, THE FIRST LIFE BORN ON ETERNIA, SAW THE GODDESS AS SERPOS.
SHE WAS PRIMORDIAL. BLOOD, PASSION AND DESIRE.
KING HSSSS SOUGHT TO STEAL SERPOS' POWER AND THUS BROUGHT DEVASTATION ON HIS PEOPLE.
AN ICE AGE FOLLOWED, THE END OF THE AGE OF SERPOS.
DID HSSSS CAUSE THAT, OR WAS IT SIMPLY A PAGE IN TIME TURNING?
WAS HSSSS MERELY AN AGENT OF DESTINY?
TODAY'S ETERNIANS SEE THE GODDESS AS ZOAR.
TO US, SHE IS THE GREAT PRESERVER. HER LIGHT, WE IMAGINED, WOULD SHINE THROUGH THE UNIVERSE FOR ETERNITY.
THE HORDE SEES THE GODDESS AS HOROKOTH.
TO THEM, SHE IS THE COMING DESTROYER. THE DARKNESS AT THE END OF DAYS.

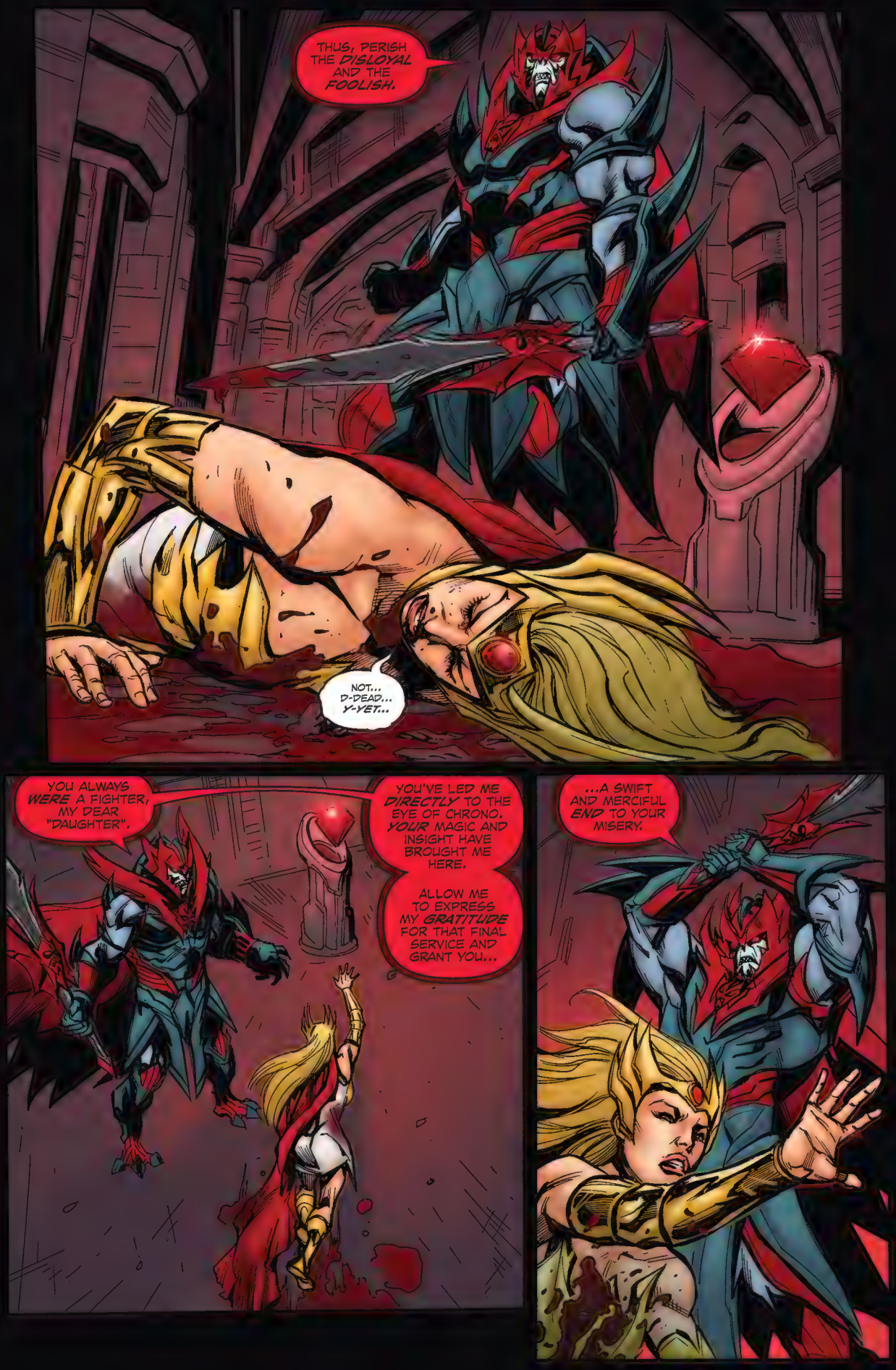
IN THIS ASPECT, THE GODDESS WILL DESTROY THE UNIVERSE OF LIGHT AND USHER IN A NEW UNIVERSE.
THE MORPHE UNIVERSE. THE AGE OF HORDAK.
IT MUST BE STOPPED. THE DARKNESS DRIVEN BACK AND...
IT IS THE CENTRAL BELIEF OF THE HORDE THAT ONE FROM THEIR RANKS WILL FIND THE GODDESS AND TRIUMPH IN THE NEW AGE.
HORDAK SEES HIMSELF AS THAT CHOSEN ONE.
NOW THAT HE HOLDS CASTLE GRAYSKULL, HE HAS ACCESS TO THE FIRES OF ETERNITY.
HE HAS FOUND THE GODDESS THROUGH HER OWN LIGHT.
NO. NO, NO.
WE WILL STOP HIM--
CAN WE?
IS THE AGE OF HORDAK INEVITABLE?
EVERYTHING THAT IS BORN LIVES AND THEN DIES, ADAM.
IS THE SAME NOT TRUE OF THE UNIVERSE?

LIKE HOGGG BEFORE HIM, IS HORDAK MERELY AN AGENT OF DESTINY?
WE WILL BEAT HORDAK, WHATEVER IT TAKES.
MOUNT ZOAR IS ANCIENT. DESTINY MEETS HERE IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.
IT HAS BEEN A PLACE SACRED TO ALL RACES.
THIS DOOR? YOU FEEL IT CALLING TO YOU?
YES. WHAT LIES BEYOND IT?
THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION.
"WHATEVER IT TAKES," YOU SAID.
WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO DEFEAT HORDAK?

NNNH... GNN.
THE E-EYE... MUST FIND IT... WILL FIND IT...
SH-SHOW ME WHERE IT IS...

C-CLOSE. IT M-MUST BE CLOSE...
THERE. THE EYE OF CHRONO.
MINE, I THINK.
N-NOOO!

SHHKKK
OOH!


THUS, PERISH THE DISLOYAL AND THE FOOLISH.
NOT... D-DEAD... Y-YET...
YOU ALWAYS WERE A FIGHTER, MY DEAR "DAUGHTER".
YOU'VE LED ME DIRECTLY TO THE EYE OF CHRONO. YOUR MAGIC AND INSIGHT HAVE BROUGHT ME HERE.
ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE FOR THAT FINAL SERVICE AND GRANT YOU...
...A SWIFT AND MERCIFUL END TO YOUR MISERY.

SKKZZZKKTKKTT
UGHNNK!
SKELETOR!
YES, HORDAK. YOUR PUPIL RETURNS.
HA. YOU ACTUALLY LOOK WORRIED.

YOU WERE GONE. FINISHED.
NO MATTER. YOU ARE BROKEN, SKELETOR. YOU CANNOT HOPE TO DEFEAT ME IN A FIGHT.
I DON'T NEED TO FIGHT YOU...
... JUST ESCAPE YOU.
NO! DAMN YOU--

NOOOOOO!
HMMMM...
...THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL ARE *MINE.*
A *TRIUMPH,* CHILD.
CHILD?
DON'T DIE ON US *NOW,* MY DEAR...

...NOT WHEN WE HAVE A WORLD LEFT TO SAVE.

PAST AND FUTURE

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Stjepan Šejić**

M-MY SW...M-MY SWORD...
HUSH. REST, CHILD. YOU ARE SORELY WOUNDED.
M-MY SWORD...G-GIVE ME M-MY SWORD...
HER SWORD? SHE ASKS FOR HER SWORD? HA!
DOES SHE TAKE US FOR FOOLS?
WHAT'S SHE GOING TO DO? FIGHT US? HA HA HA!
SILENCE! I DIDN'T BRING HER HERE TO WATCH HER DIE!
EVIL-LYN! FETCH THE DAMN SWORD!
BAH! IF I MUST!
HERE. I HOPE SHE CHOKES ON IT.
AND THAT CAN BE ARRANGED IF SHE CAN'T DO IT HERSELF.
JUST BE QUIET!
HERE, CHILD. YOUR SWORD...

S-SO C-COLD...
WHAT IS THIS? SKELETOR, WHAT IS SHE DOING?
WHAT IS SHE DOING?
JUST WATCH AND WAIT!
MNNHHHAAAA!!!

GET BACK, MONSTERS!
I CAN... AND WILL... SLAY YOU IF I MUST!
INCREDIBLE. HER SWORD-- IT HEALS!

WE MEAN YOU NO HARM, CHILD.
THESE ARE NOT "MONSTERS." COME, KNOW THEM...
...EVIL-LYN...
...TRAP JAW...
...AND BEAST MAN.
AND WHAT DO WE CALL YOU?
"HER-MAN"?
HA HA HA!
ENOUGH WITH YOUR MOCKING, YOU OVERGROWN FUR COAT!
GHHKK-KKK-KK!
I AM CALLED SHE-RA.
FASCINATING.
I WOULD SPEAK WITH "SHE-RA..." ALONE.

WE WILL RETURN SHORTLY.
I DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL...
I *LIED* EARLIER. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
WHO YOU *REALLY* ARE.
DESPARA.
ADORA.
DID SHADOW WEAVER EVER TELL YOU THE TALE? HOW I ABDUCTED YOU FOR HORDAK WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?
I'VE NOW HAD THE PLEASURE OF *RESCUING* YOU FROM HORDAK. SUCH IRONY.
YES. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
DESPARA'S PREDECESSOR. HORDAK'S FORMER PUPIL.
UNCLE.
CLEARLY, WE HAVE MUCH IN COMMON.
FOR INSTANCE, WE BOTH KNOW HOW DANGEROUS HORDAK IS.
HE HAS CONTROL OVER CASTLE GRAYSKULL-- HE'S A THREAT TO ALL.

HA HA HA!
YOU KNOW, NOT SO LONG AGO, HE-MAN MADE ME BELIEVE THAT CASTLE GRAYSKULL CONTAINED NO POWER.
THAT THE POWER RESIDED ONLY WITHIN HIM.
A PIECE OF MISDIRECTION, I NOW REALIZE.
YOUR BROTHER IS CLEARLY MORE CUNNING THAN HIS BICEPS SUGGEST.
MY BROTHER CLEARLY BELIEVES THAT YOU CANNOT BE TRUSTED.
I DON'T BLAME HIM FOR THAT. BUT I HAVE COME TO SEE THINGS IN A NEW LIGHT...
...WHEN I LAST FACED HIM, IT WAS ON THE WORLD KNOWN AS EARTH.
HE AND A HUMAN SORCERER BANISHED ME AND ORKO TO THE NETHERWORLD, HOPING TO TRAP US FOREVER...
...BUT THE SORCERER DID NOT KNOW THAT I POSSESSED THE EYE OF CHAOS.
SUMMONING IT ALLOWED ME TO TAP INTO THE FABRIC OF SPACE, AND TELEPORT MYSELF ACROSS DIMENSIONS.
I USED IT TO ESCAPE BACK TO ETERNIA...

...BUT THE MULTIVERSE IS VAST AND COMPLEX.
I ENDED UP REELING FROM ONE REALITY TO THE NEXT. I SAW A THOUSAND DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF ETERNIA ACROSS HYPERTIME.
STRANGE ITERATIONS, PARALLEL UNIVERSES...AND DIFFERENT MULTIVERSAL VERSIONS OF MYSELF IN ALL OF THEM.

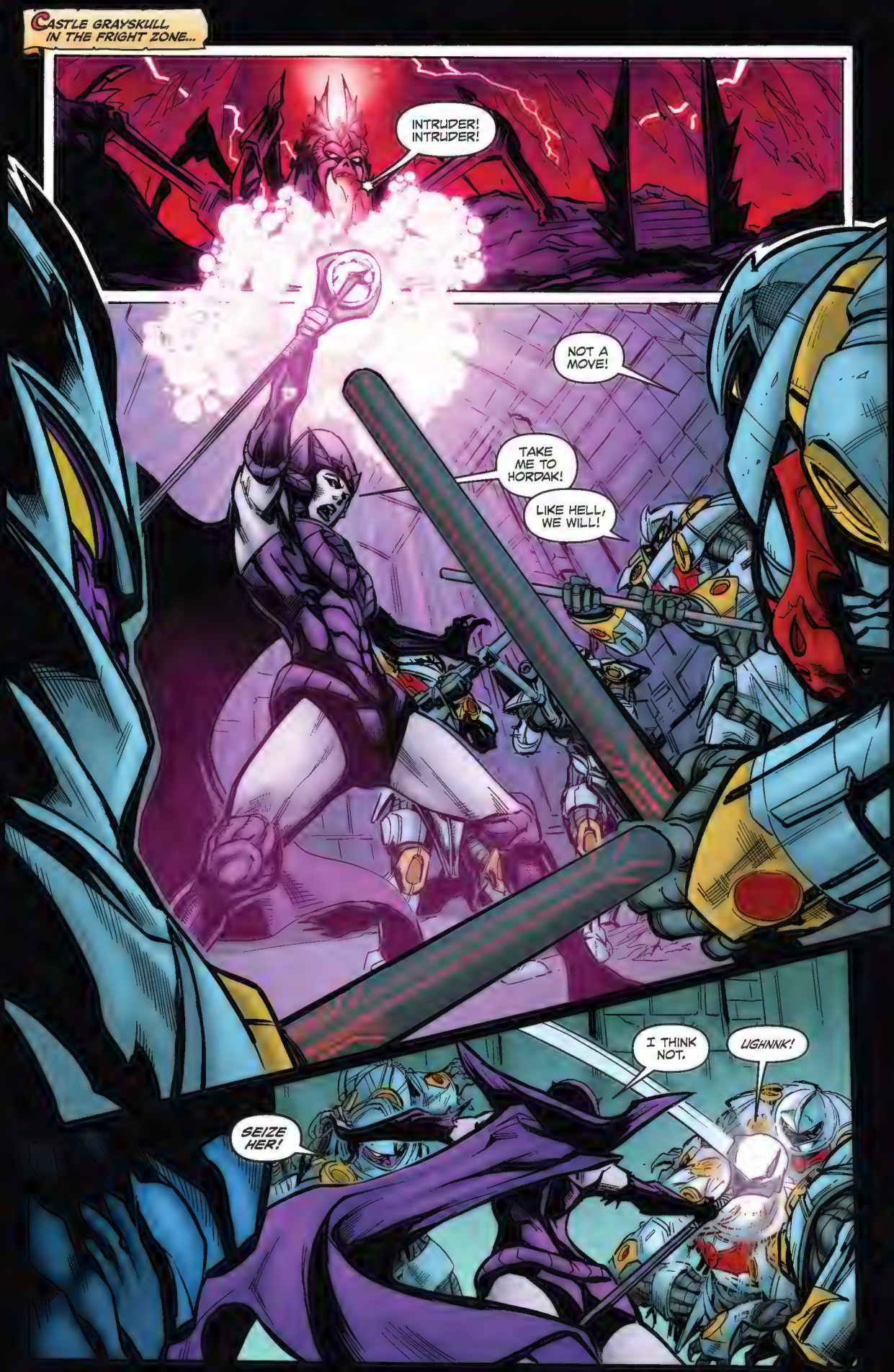
FINALLY, I RETURNED TO MY ETERNIA.
I HAD LEARNED ONE DARK TRUTH.
IN EACH AND EVERY ETERNIA, SKELETOR LOSES.

ALWAYS.
THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL NEVER BECOMES MINE.
THERE IS ALWAYS A *HE-MAN* TO DEFEAT ME.

CALL IT AN EPIPHANY, CHILD.
I DO NOT LIKE BEING DESTINED TO LOSE.
MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN ABOUT REBELLION...

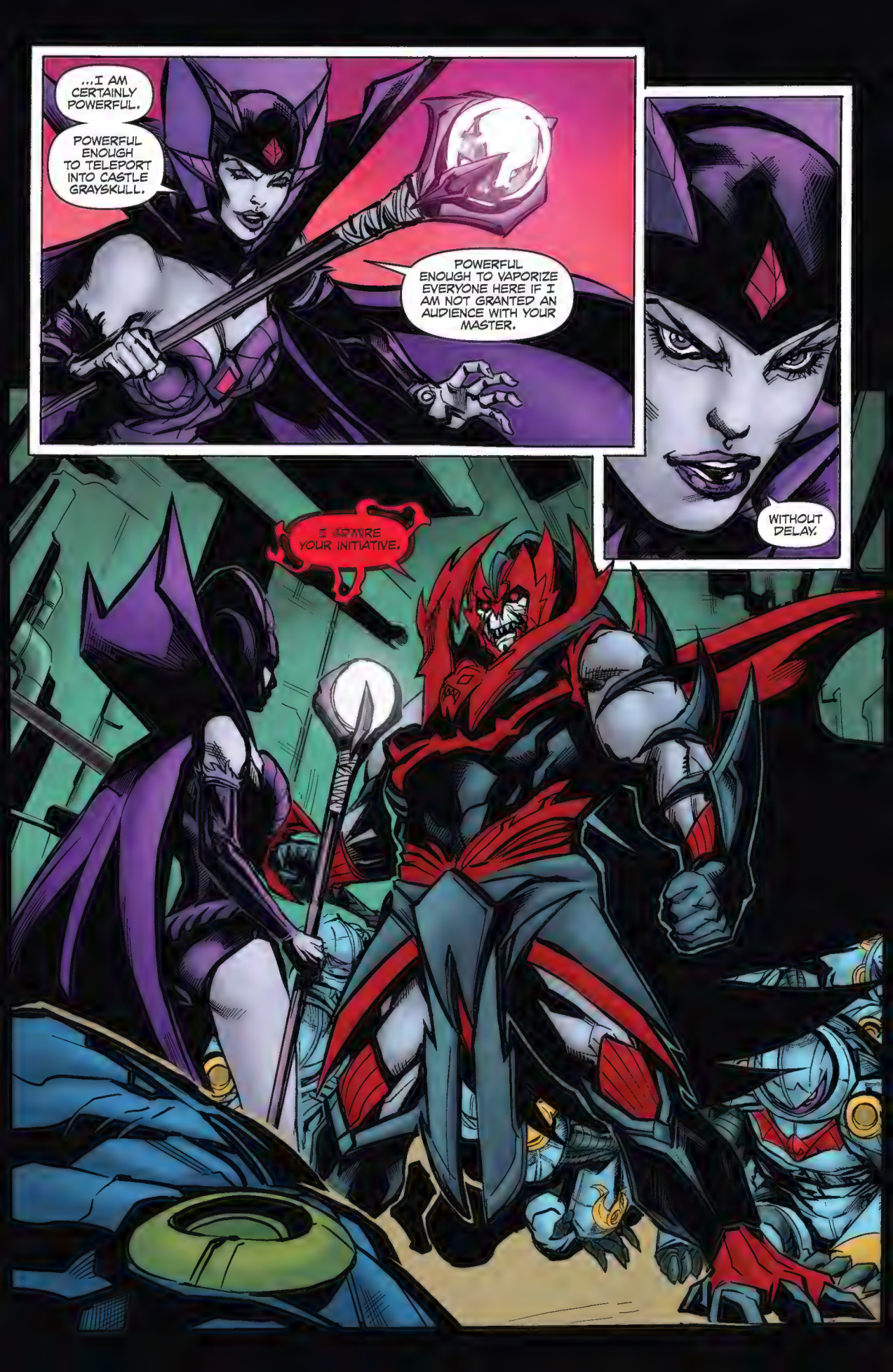
...AS A YOUNG PRINCE, I REBELLED AGAINST MY BROTHER, RANDOR.
AS SKELETOR, I REBELLED AGAINST HORDAK.
I HAVE ONE REBELLION LEFT IN ME, SHE-RA...
...AGAINST DESTINY.
I HAVE SEEN WHAT YOUR SWORD CAN DO. HEAL ME.
RESTORE ME TO MY STRENGTH AS SKELETOR, SO THAT I CAN JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST HORDAK.
AND WHEN HORDAK IS DEFEATED, HEAL ME AGAIN. HEAL ME OF SKELETOR.
RENEW ME AS PRINCE KELDOR, SO THAT I CAN BEGIN A FRESH LIFE...
...A BETTER LIFE.
WHAT? THIS...THIS WILL NOT STAND!
IT IS AN OUTRAGE! AN OUTRAGE!
LYN? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
WHAT ARE YOU MUTTERING ABOUT NOW?

TREACHERY! SHEER TREACHERY!
DON'T TOUCH THOSE!
PUT THEM DOWN!
SKELETOR BETRAYS US! AND IT WILL NOT STAND!
ARRGHH!!
NO! NOOO!
WHAT IS THE COMMOTION?
LORD, YOU ARE WHOLE AGAIN! HOW--?
NEVER MIND THAT! WHAT HAPPENED?
IT WAS EVIL-LYN. SHE CAME TO US UPSET!
SHE...SHE STOLE THE EYES OF CHAOS AND CHRONOS AND MAGICKED HERSELF AWAY!
DAMN HER.
DAMN HER!


CASTLE GRAYSKULL, IN THE FRIGHT ZONE...
INTRUDER! INTRUDER!
NOT A MOVE!
TAKE ME TO HORDAK!
LIKE HELL, WE WILL!
I THINK NOT.
UGHNNK!
SEIZE HER!

ARRGGH!
AIIEEE!
UGHHKK!
SKKRRKTT
KRAKK
WHHKRKKK

AIIGHH! EEEGH!
FWOOOSSHH!
STAND ASIDE! I WILL SEE HORDAK!
NOW!
YES, LORD MODULOK!
MODULOK IS A FOOL.
KILL HER. IMMEDIATELY. I KNOW FIRSTHAND HOW POWERFUL SHE IS.
TRI-KLOPS... A SURPRISE TO SEE YOU HERE...

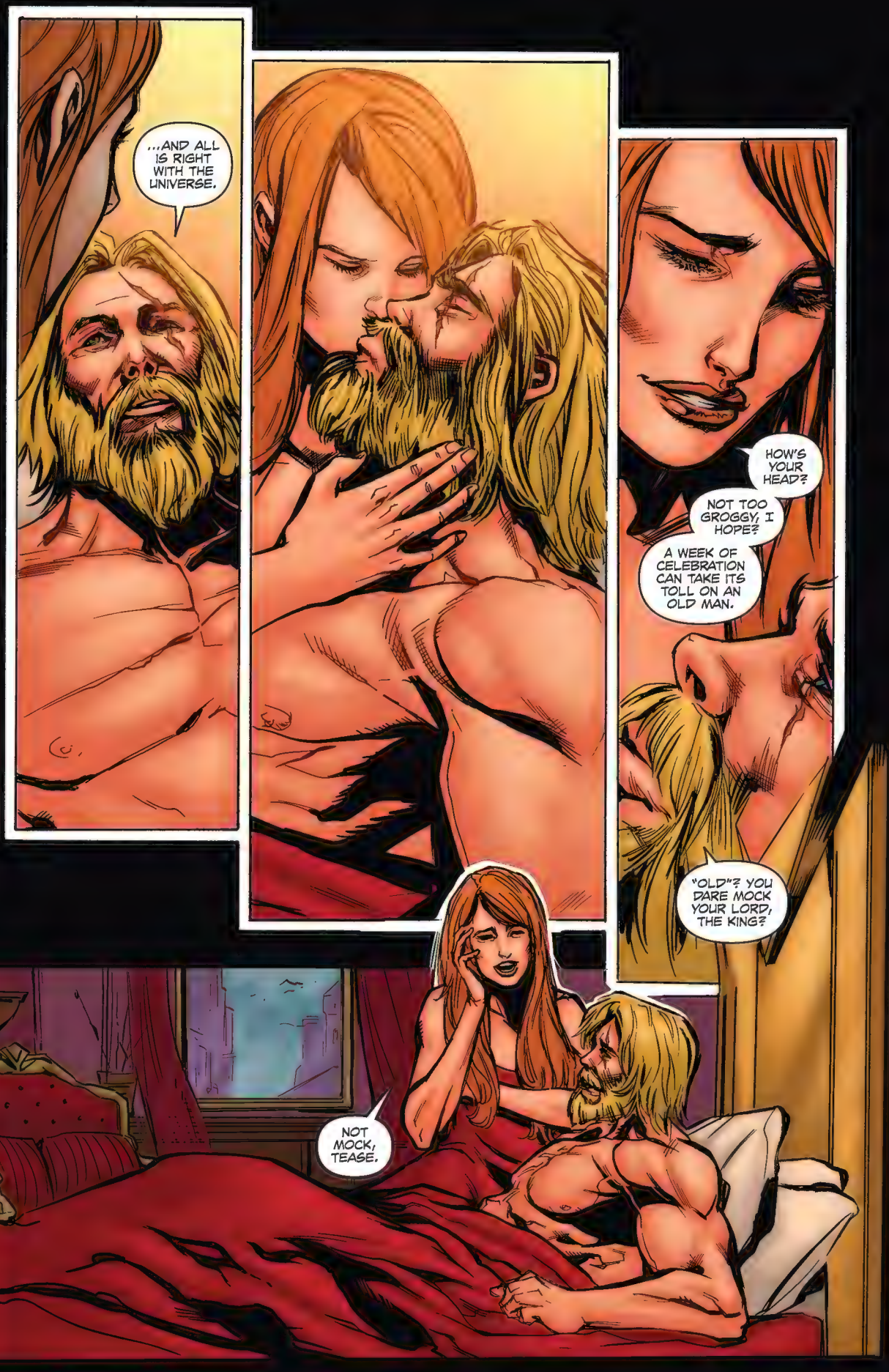

...I AM CERTAINLY POWERFUL.
POWERFUL ENOUGH TO TELEPORT INTO CASTLE GRAYSKULL.
POWERFUL ENOUGH TO VAPORIZE EVERYONE HERE IF I AM NOT GRANTED AN AUDIENCE WITH YOUR MASTER.
WITHOUT DELAY.
I ADMIRE YOUR INITIATIVE.

GREAT LORD, MY GREETINGS TO YOU.
I KNOW YOU. SKELETOR'S WITCH.
NO LONGER.
SKELETOR IS A SPENT FORCE. THERE IS NO FUTURE WITH HIM...
...INDEED, THERE IS NO LONGER ANY FUTURE AT ALL...
...EXCEPT IN YOU.
MY GIFT.
WHAT? WHAT IS THIS?
THE EYE OF CHAOS! THE EYE OF CHRONOS!

MAY YOUR KINGDOM COME.

MOUNT ZOAR IS ANCIENT. DESTINY MEETS HERE IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.
IT HAS BEEN A PLACE SACRED TO ALL RACES.
THIS DOOR? YOU FEEL IT CALLING TO YOU?
YES. WHAT LIES BEYOND IT?
THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION.
"WHATEVER IT TAKES," YOU SAID.
WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO DEFEAT HORDAK?
YOU MAY NOT LIKE WHAT YOU SEE.

GOOD MORNING, MY HUSBAND.
HOW FARE YOU TODAY?
I AWAKE AND SEE YOUR BEAUTY, TEELA...


...AND ALL IS RIGHT WITH THE UNIVERSE.
HOW'S YOUR HEAD?
NOT TOO GROGGY, I HOPE?
A WEEK OF CELEBRATION CAN TAKE ITS TOLL ON AN OLD MAN.
"OLD"? YOU DARE MOCK YOUR LORD, THE KING?
NOT MOCK, TEASE.

TEASE AWAY.
NOTHING WILL SPOIL THIS MORNING.
INDEED NOT...
...THIRTY YEARS TO THE DAY SINCE YOU DEFEATED HORDAK.
THIRTY YEARS SINCE YOU BROUGHT PEACE TO ETERNIA...

...MAY IT LAST FOREVERMORE!

NOW AND FOREVER

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan & Tom Derenick Artists

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Pop Mhan**

CITIZENS OF PROUD ETERNOS! BOW YOUR HEADS! RAISE UP YOUR VOICES!
ON THIS GREAT DAY, BEHOLD AND WORSHIP YOUR LORD AND MASTER...

THIRTY YEARS LATER...
...KING HE-MAN!
MY LORD! BLESS ME!
YOUR MAJESTY! GRANT ME YOUR FAVOR!
KEEP BACK, COMMONER!
NO ONE TOUCHES THE KING!

THEY ADORE ME, BEAST MAN. THEY ONLY WISH TO TOUCH THE HEM OF MY CLOAK AND RECEIVE A BENEDICTION.
YOUR SECURITY IS MY PURVIEW, MAJESTY. I MUST KEEP THE RABBLE BACK.
BLESS MY CHILD, GREAT LORD! HE IS SICK, AND THE POWER OF YOUR TOUCH WILL CURE HIM!
KRAAAAA
YOU ARE TOO STRICT, BEAST MAN. THESE ARE MY PEOPLE.
WHAT AFFLICTS YOUR CHILD, WOMAN? HERE, LET ME TAKE HIM.
OH MY LORD! THANK YOU!
I WOULD--
KRAAAAA
ALARM! THE FALCON HAS SENSED DANGER!
NO!
THIS IS NO CHILD!

A CHIMERA ACID BOMB...
ANOTHER VILE TRAITOR TRYING TO ASSASSINATE YOU!
DEATH TO THE FALSE KING! DEATH TO THE TYRANT!
PUT HER HEAD ON A SPIKE.
RIGHT AWAY, MAJESTY.
THIS INSURGENCY WILL NOT STAND! I--
GRRAMM MBMBBL-BLL
ETERNIA! ANOTHER QUAKE?
STAY CALM! STAY CALM, ALL OF YOU!

KKRKRMHKKKKCCCHH
THE MONUMENT OF ZOAR!
THE QUAKE SUBSIDES, LORD.
BUT IT IS NOT THE FIRST, NOR, I FEAR, THE LAST.
THE MONUMENT HAS FALLEN. AN ILL-OMEN ON SUCH AN AUSPICIOUS DAY.
NEVER MIND MY DAMN PEOPLE, THE VERY EARTH REBELS AGAINST MY WILL!
SADDLE THE STEEDS. WE RIDE FOR GRAYSKULL.
YES, MY LORD.

THIRTY YEARS OF RULE AND ORDER, AND *THIS* IS MY REWARD?
I WILL *BURN* THE REBELLION OUT, AND I WILL *PACIFY* THE WORLD ITSELF.
NO MORE REVOLUTION. *NO MORE* QUAKES AND TUMULT.
YOU *HAVE* THE POWER, MY LORD.
OPEN THE GATES! THE KING APPROACHES!
AYE, LORD BEAST MAN!
STEADY, PANTHOR.
WHAT IS YOUR WILL, LORD?
I SEEK *ANSWERS*, OLD FRIEND. FETCH THE PRISONER TO ME...
GRRRRNNGG

MISTRESS OF FARSEERS! WHAT DO THE EYES OF YOUR RAPTORS SHOW YOU?
ALL THINGS, GREAT KING. EVERY PERSON, EVERY PLANET. THE PAST. THE PRESENT.
ASK ME WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW.
THE FUTURE.

I...MY LORD, I CAN'T...
THAT IS TO SAY...THE FUTURE HAS GONE DARK. OUR MIRRORS SHOW US NOTHING.
NOTHING? WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ETERNIA?
I... KNOW NOT, LORD.
THE PRISONER, MY LORD.
ORKO. YOU TRAITOR SCUM.
ONE LAST CHANCE. TELL ME OF THE REBEL UNDERGROUND.
I... KN-KNOW N-NOTHING OF ANY R-REBEL--
LIAR! YOU'RE A PART OF IT! YOU'VE ARMED THEM WITH YOUR PATHETIC PARLOR TRICKS!
THEY TRIED TO KILL ME AGAIN TODAY! TODAY, THIS DAY OF DAYS!
URKKHHHK!
TH-THEN I W-WEEP TH-THAT THEY DID NOT SUCCEED.
INDEED YOU WILL. AS WILL YOUR LEADER...
...BRING HIM TO THE FORGE!

I WANT YOU TO SEE THIS, ORKO! THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL! THIS IS WHAT YOUR REBELLION HAS DONE!
THE FIRES RAGE, FIERCER THAN EVER!
YOU HAVE DISRUPTED THE PLANET! THE FIRES OF ETERNITY! THE GODDESS HERSELF!
N-NO, MY LORD. TH-THIS IS NOT OUR DOING...
...ALL TH-THIS TURMOIL. IT IS A S-SYMPTOM OF YOUR MADNESS.
W-WHAT HAS BECOME OF YOU... ADAM?
THAT NAME NO LONGER HAS ANY MEANING TO ME!

KKRKRKRMMMMMMM
YOU POOR FOOL, ADAM! ETERNIA IS DYING! THIS IS THE END TIMES! THE END TIMES!
AND I STILL HAVE ONE TRICK LEFT UP MY SLEEVE!
REVEAL YOURSELVES! FINISH HIM!
LONG LIVE ETERNIA!
DEATH TO THE FALSE KING!
TRAITORS! TRAITORS IN OUR MIDST!
STRATOS! RIO BLAST! YOU TREACHEROUS CURS!
ORKO HID US FROM THE FALCON'S WATCH LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO GET THIS CLOSE!
WE AIN'T GONNA WASTE THIS CHANCE TO STRIKE!

DIE, BEAST MAN!
DEATH TO THE FALSE--
FAARRGHHH!
URGGKKK!
IF DEATH IS WHAT YOU SEEK, TRAITOR--
SHHHTINGG
ARRGHH!
--YOU HAVE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE!
I AM HE-MAN! I AM POWER!
AIIIGHHH!

NO, I AM.

EVERYTHING I HAVE DONE, I DID TO PROTECT THE REALM!
TO DEFEND THE SECRETS OF GRAYSKULL!
AT WHAT COST, BROTHER?
YOU ARE A POISON TO THIS WORLD! A TORMENT!
SHE-RA! CURSE YOU!
DAMN YOUR GREAT REBELLION!
GRAYSKULL FORGED MY BLADE IN CASE HIS POWER EVER FELL TO THE WRONG HANDS!
THE SWORD OF PROTECTION GAVE YOU THAT SCAR!
NOW, IT WILL TAKE YOUR LIFE!

YOU HAVE LEFT ME NO CHOICE!
YOU WILL NOT PREVAIL! I AM KING!
IT BREAKS MY HEART, BROTHER, BUT GRAYSKULL HAS RENDERED FINAL JUDGMENT...
...FOR THE HONOR OF GRAYSKULL...
...ETERNIA MUST BE FREED!
UGGHHHKKKK!

MOTHER... FORGIVE ME.
NO! THE ALTAR!
THE VENOM OF HIS BLOOD MUST NOT--
HOROKOTH! HOROKOTH!
NO! ALL IS LOST! ETERNIA, THE UNIVERSE... ALL LOST!

THAT... IS HOW THE UNIVERSE ENDS?
"AND THERE WILL BE, IN THE FUTURE, A WAR BETWEEN TWO OF KING GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD...
"...ONE WILL BRING DESTRUCTION, THE OTHER WILL FIGHT IT BACK."
AS THE PROPHECY SAID.
T-TEELA?
THAT PROPHECY IS FROM THE AGE OF GRAYSKULL. I...I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT REFERRED TO ME AND SKELETOR.
NO, HE-MAN. IT SPEAKS OF YOU AND YOUR SISTER.
WHAT DID I JUST WITNESS?
THE FUTURE. YOU WANTED TO KNOW WHAT IT WOULD TAKE TO DEFEAT HORDAK.
THAT WAS YOUR ANSWER. MORE POWER THAN YOU HAVE EVER DEMONSTRATED.
MORE POWER THAN ANYONE HAS EVER WIELDED.

SINCE YOU FIRST HELD YOUR SWORD ALOFT AND SAID THE WORDS, YOU HAVE CHANNELED A GREAT POWER TO SERVE A NOBLE CAUSE.
BUT HE-MAN IS YOUR WARRIOR FORM.
YOU CANNOT... SHOULD NOT... REMAIN HE-MAN ALL THE TIME.
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE WORTHY OF THE SWORD OF POWER THAT KING GRAYSKULL FORGED SO LONG AGO.
YOU ACCEPTED THE CONSUMING POWER, BUT YOU TEMPERED IT WITH YOUR HUMANITY.
BUT THIRTY YEARS PRIOR TO THIS NIGHT, YOU BEGAN TO FEEL DIFFERENT. YOU SAW A WORLD WHERE DEMONS LIKE HORDAK DINE ON THE SOULS OF A BILLION INNOCENTS. WHERE DEVILS LIKE HSSSS COULD BE ANYONE, EVEN YOUR OWN FATHER.
YOU BEGAN TO FEEL THAT YOU COULD NEVER LOWER YOUR GUARD AGAIN.
SO YOU ELECTED TO BE STRONGER THAN EVER BEFORE.
YOU PURGED YOURSELF OF PRINCE ADAM.
YOU RID YOURSELF OF HUMANITY AND BECAME HE-MAN PERMANENTLY. YOU BECAME...
...POWER INCARNATE.
YOU'VE BEEN CONTEMPLATING THE IDEA FOR SOME TIME NOW, YES?
I ONLY WANT...
YOUR INTENTIONS ARE NOBLE, BUT THE RESULTS ARE DISASTROUS.
YOU DEFEAT HORDAK, BUT BECOME A DICTATOR YOURSELF. "ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY," AS YOUR EARTH MOTHER WAS FOND OF SAYING.
YOU TRIGGER THE END OF ETERNIA AND, UNINTENTIONALLY, YOU BRING ABOUT THE AGE OF NIGHTFALL.

THAT IS WHAT I MEANT WHEN I TOLD YOU THAT THE AGE OF HOROKOTH IS *INEVITABLE.*
WHETHER CAUSED BY HORDAK OR HE-MAN, *EVERY* SYSTEM BREAKS DOWN INTO ENTROPY.
SO THAT'S *IT? THIS* IS WHAT THE GODDESS PLANNED? *DEATH* AND *DESTRUCTION? NO WAY OUT FOR ANY OF US?!*
EVERYTHING ENDS...EXCEPT *ETERNITY.*
ONLY *ETERNITY* CAN PREVENT HOROKOTH, AND ONLY *ADAM* CAN TAP INTO ITS POWER.
HE IS *UNIQUE.* THE GODDESS HAS BEEN WAITING FOR *HIM.*
WHY DO YOU THINK SHE HAD YOU REFORGE YOUR SWORD? THAT IS *NOT* THE SWORD OF POWER YOU FIRST WIELDED AS HE-MAN...
...IT HAS BECOME THE *SWORD OF ETERNITY.* WITHIN IT LIES A POWER THAT ONLY *ADAM* CAN UNLOCK.
IF *HE-MAN* IS WILLING TO PAY THE *PRICE...*
FOR THE SAKE OF ETERNIA, THAT PRICE IS *SMALL.*
HE-MAN--

KRAAANGGG
YAAARRGHHH!

MOUNT ZOAR...
ADAM.
IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU, PRINCE ADAM.
GRAYSKULL KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME. AS HE-MAN, YOU DEFENDED THIS REALM...
...NOW, AS ADAM, YOU WILL SAVE IT.

MASTER OF DEATH

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Edgar Salazar Penciller

Jason Gorder **Denis Freitas** **Rob Lean**
Inkers

Mark Roberts Colorist

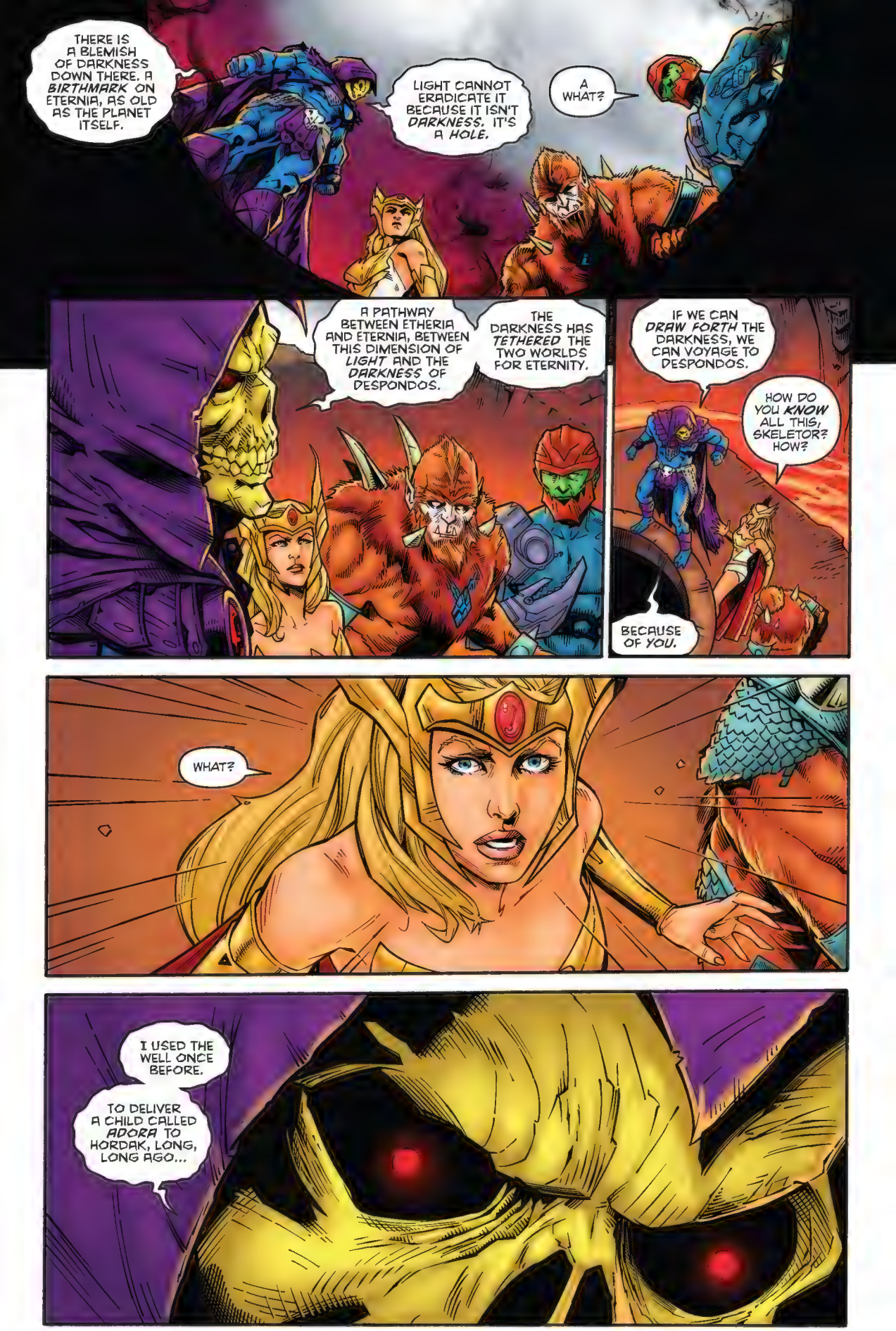
Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Jonboy Meyers**

ETERNIA...
...THE LINE WHERE THE LIGHT AND DARK HEMISPHERES MEET.
ON THE SIDE OF DAYLIGHT, LIFE THRIVES...
...WHILE ON THE SIDE OF DARKNESS, THE NOCTURNAL WASTELANDS LAY SILENT.
BUT ON THE TERMINATOR LINE BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARK...
...ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE PLANET FROM MOUNT ZOAR...
...A LONE AND EERIE STRUCTURE STANDS.

HURRY.
IF EVIL-LYN HAS DELIVERED THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL TO HORDAK, AS I SUSPECT, WE HAVE PRECIOUS *LITTLE* TIME TO FIND A WAY TO DEFEAT HIM.
TREACHEROUS *WITCH*...
I WOULDN'T WASTE TIME FRETTING OVER EVIL-LYN'S BETRAYAL, BEAST MAN.
THERE IS *STILL* HOPE FOR OUR CAUSE.
REALLY?
MY DEAR SHE-RA, HORDAK WAS ONCE *PINNED* TO ETHERIA IN THE DARK DIMENSION OF DESPONDOS.
HIS POWER SOURCE WAS THERE. THE BILLIONS OF SOULS HE HAD CONSUMED OVER THE EONS, TRAPPED IN HIS VAULT.
WHEN HE CAME TO ETHERIA'S SISTER WORLD *ETERNIA*, AND ACQUIRED THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, HE LEFT THAT POWER SOURCE *BEHIND*. FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST.
IT IS A *WEAKNESS* WE CAN EXPLOIT.
WE MUST JOURNEY TO DESPONDOS.
YOU SAY THAT LIKE IT'S *NOTHING*.
WE DON'T HAVE A TRANS-DIMENSIONAL TRANSPONDER OR--
SHE-RA...

...WE STAND AT THE RIM OF THE WELL OF DARKNESS.
WE CAN DO ANYTHING.


THERE IS A BLEMISH OF DARKNESS DOWN THERE. A BIRTHMARK ON ETERNIA, AS OLD AS THE PLANET ITSELF.
LIGHT CANNOT ERADICATE IT BECAUSE IT ISN'T DARKNESS. IT'S A HOLE.
A WHAT?
A PATHWAY BETWEEN ETHERIA AND ETERNIA, BETWEEN THIS DIMENSION OF LIGHT AND THE DARKNESS OF DESPONDOS.
THE DARKNESS HAS TETHERED THE TWO WORLDS FOR ETERNITY.
IF WE CAN DRAW FORTH THE DARKNESS, WE CAN VOYAGE TO DESPONDOS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS, SKELETOR? HOW?
BECAUSE OF YOU.
WHAT?
I USED THE WELL ONCE BEFORE.
TO DELIVER A CHILD CALLED ADORA TO HORDAK, LONG, LONG AGO...

SEVEN YEARS AGO, ON ETHERIA, I COMMANDED THE HORDE FORCES DURING THE ATTACK ON CASTLE BRIGHTMOON...
TEAR DOWN THE WALLS! IN HORDAK'S NAME!
BRING QUEEN ANGELLA TO ME!

P-PLEASE--!
CEASE YOUR WHIMPERING, "GREAT QUEEN." YOUR RULE IS *OVER*. YOUR MONARCHY IS *TOPPLED*.
MY *MAGIC* ECLIPSES YOUR MOONS! YOUR CASTLE'S POWER IS SHUT DOWN!
OH, BY THE LIGHT! *NO!*
YIELD TO ME!
DARKNESS NOW RULES OVER BRIGHTMOON JUST AS IT WILL SOON RULE OVER *ALL* ETHERIA.
BOW DOWN BEFORE HORDAK! RECOGNIZE HORDAK AS THE *TRUE* RULER OF ETHERIA!
NOW AND *EVER AFTER!*

THE FRIGHT ZONE, ETHERIA...
BRIGHTMOON IS ENSLAVED...
...A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN, SKELETOR.
THESE PRISONERS WILL BE REPURPOSED. THEIR SOULS WILL FUEL HORDAK'S POWER, AND THEIR BODIES...WILL BE PUT TO GOOD USE, TOO.
I OWE ALL THAT I KNOW OF THE DARK ARTS TO YOUR TEACHING, SHADOW WEAVER.
IT DISTRESSES ME THAT I AM NO CLOSER TO FINDING THE CRYSTAL CASTLE.
THIS IS A REGRET. THE CRYSTAL CASTLE IS A BEACON OF HOPE FOR THE REBELLION.
IT MUST BE DESTROYED.
I WILL FIND IT. I WILL RAZE IT FOR YOU.
NOT FOR ME. FOR HORDAK.

NO. I AM *YOUR* SERVANT.
PERHAPS, ONE DAY, I WILL BE *MORE* THAN THAT.
I KNOW YOU *BETTER* THAN YOU THINK.
YOU WEAR A MASK, WEAVER, BUT YOU CANNOT HIDE YOUR *TRUE SELF* FROM ME.
YOU CANNOT HIDE YOUR *PAIN*. I KNOW YOUR POWERS CAME AT A *PRICE*.
AS DID YOURS.
SOME PRICES ECLIPSE ALL OTHERS.
WHEN HORDAK GAVE YOU YOUR POWERS, HE DID MORE THAN *ENHANCE* YOU. HE *ERASED* YOU. HE CONSUMED YOUR *SOUL*... *AND* THE SOUL OF ANOTHER.
THE CHILD YOU WERE CARRYING AT THE TIME. THAT IS THE *REAL* PRICE.
YOUR *PAIN*.
BUT WE ARE HERE NOW, AND THE FUTURE IS WHAT WE MAKE OF IT... *TOGETHER*.
I PLEDGE MYSELF TO *YOU*.

I'VE LOVED YOU LONGER THAN YOU CAN KNOW.
YOU SHOULD GO TO HORDAK NOW, MY LOVE. HE SUMMONS YOU.
WERE YOU LISTENING, MY LORD?
I HEAR ALL.
HIS DISLOYALTY BEGINS AGAIN...
"...THE TIME HAS COME TO COMPLETE THE CYCLE."
MY GREAT LORD HORDAK!
FIVE YEARS YOU HAVE SERVED ME, SKELETOR. FIVE YEARS, AND YOU HAVE BEEN A MIGHTY FORCE COMMANDER.
THE GREAT REBELLION CANNOT LAST FOREVER. ETHERIA WILL SOON BE MINE.
ONCE IT IS, WE CAN RE-INVADE ETERNIA AND FINISH WHAT STARTED SO LONG AGO...THE CAPTURE OF GRAYSKULL!

BUT TO DO THAT, I NEED MORE. GRAYSKULL'S ENCHANTMENTS PIN ME TO THIS DIMENSION.
ONLY HIS BLOOD WILL FREE ME.
YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE BLOOD OF RANDOR. YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE BLOOD OF KELDOR.
BUT I NEED MORE FROM THE HEIRS OF GRAYSKULL.
YOU MEAN ADAM, GREAT ONE?
I WILL TRAVEL TO ETERNIA AT ONCE AND SECURE MY NEPHEW'S LIFEBLOOD SO THAT YOU--
NOT JUST ADAM.
THERE IS ANOTHER CHILD. A BABY LOST TO TIME EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO...
A... TWIN?
BRING THE CHILD TO ME. BOTH, IF YOU CAN.
YOU WILL NEED THIS...

...THIS STAFF.
A WEAPON?
A POWERFUL WEAPON.
THE SKULL THAT CROWNS IT BELONGED TO A POTENT DEMON THAT I ONCE HAD THE PLEASURE OF SLAYING.
THERE IS ENOUGH POWER LEFT IN THE STAFF FOR ONE TRIP BACK THROUGH TIME.
RETRIEVE THE CHILD ADORA BEFORE SHE IS LOST TO ME FOREVER.
TIME TRAVEL? IS THAT WISE, LORD?
TIME CAN SPLINTER AND CAUSE UNFORESEEN COMPLICATIONS.
AGREED. BUT IT HAS HAPPENED. IT MUST HAPPEN. IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN.
GO NOW. TAKE THE STAFF AND SECURE MY FUTURE FOR ME.
I WILL. I--
WAIT! WHAT SORCERY IS THIS?

"A VISION! THE STAFF IS SHOWING ME A MONSTROUS VISION!

WHAT... WHAT DID I JUST SEE? MY FUTURE?
I SAW MYSELF DELIVER THE CHILD TO YOU!
I SAW YOU... MURDER ME!
UNFORTUNATE.
YOU GLIMPSED YOUR FUTURE-- BUT MY PAST.
IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT YOU SAW THIS VISION. I DID NOT ANTICIPATE THAT YOU COMING INTO CONTACT WITH THE STAFF WOULD CAUSE SO MUCH HAVOC.
TELL ME THE TRUTH! I BEG YOU!
EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO, A STRANGER CAME TO ME WITH AN INFANT, AND TOLD ME THAT I HAD SENT HIM BACK IN TIME TO RETRIEVE THIS CHILD. THAT STRANGER WAS YOU, SKELETOR.
EVIDENTLY, IT WAS A ONE-WAY TRIP.
YOU COULD NOT RETURN TO YOUR FUTURE. YOU HAD TO STAY IN THE PAST.
IN MY GENEROSITY, I ALLOWED YOU AND SHADOW WEAVER TO RAISE THE CHILD AS YOUR OWN.
SHADOW WEAVER?
IT'S TRUE, MY LOVE.
YOU BROUGHT ME A CHILD. YOU EASED MY PAIN.

YOU GAVE ME DESPARA.
FATHER. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
TIME TRAVEL.
YOU WERE RIGHT, SKELETOR.
UNFORESEEN COMPLICATIONS.
WHICH I MUST DEAL WITH.
MY LORD! NO!

YOU MUST BE CRUSHED.
I DEFY YOU!
GAAH!
TURN MY WEAPON UPON ME, WOULD YOU?
AGHHH!

I SEE NOW THAT THE STAFF IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.
TRAVELING BACK IN TIME DEPLETED ITS POWER. BUT YOU NEVER FORGOT ABOUT IT! IT WILL CREATE AN INSATIABLE HUNGER IN YOU!
A HUNGER TO WIELD IT ONCE AGAIN! TO BECOME MORE POWERFUL!
THAT HUNGER MADE YOU A THREAT AGAINST ME, AND I WAS FORCED TO END YOU!
NGHHH!
DO YOU UNDERSTAND? SKELETOR DIED BEFORE HE WAS EVER BORN!
THE SKULL IS YOURS, SKELETOR! THE SKULL OF THE DEMON YOU BECAME AND WILL YET BECOME! IT IS YOUR ONLY LEGACY!
NOW USE THE STAFF, GO BACK, AND FULFILL YOUR DESTINY! YOUR DEATH IS THE FINAL PRICE OF MY GRACE!
NOOOO!
AGGHEEEGHHH!!

NO.
FUTILE!
YOU HAVE ALREADY DIED. I HAVE ALREADY KILLED YOU.
THIS IS NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN ESCAPE.
WATCH ME.
COME, MY LOVE.
I CAN'T. I WON'T LEAVE MY CHILD.
NOT EVEN FOR YOU.
SO BE IT.

WIPE YOUR CHILD'S MIND. REMOVE ALL TRACES OF SKELETOR.
SHE MUST NOT KNOW HIM AS A FATHER. SHE IS MINE NOW. FOREVERMORE.
MY...MY LORD...
...WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
SKELETOR DID NOT GO BACK, YET WE STILL HAVE DESPARA.
NOTHING HAS CHANGED FOR US.
EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED. TIME HAS FRACTURED BECAUSE OF WHAT SKELETOR HAS DONE THIS DAY.
HE HAS ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE. HE HAS CHEATED HIS OWN DESTINY...
...HE HAS JUST BECOME THE MASTER OF DEATH.
IT WORKED, I HAVE DRAWN FORTH THE DARKNESS.
WE CAN TRAVEL TO DESPONDOS. TO THE VAULT OF SOULS.
WAIT... WAIT...

...THAT STORY...IT WAS TRUE?
THE THEFT OF ADORA? THE CORRUPTION OF YOUR TIMESTREAM?
ALL THAT TRUTH HIDDEN FROM ME... FATHER?
ALL OF IT.
NOW MAKE READY. DESPONDOS AWAITS.
HORDAK SHOULD HAVE NEVER HANDED ME THE KEY.

THE END OF ALL FEAR

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Pop Mhan**

WAR. BRUTAL. ETERNAL.
ONWARDSSSS, SSSNAKE MEN! INTO THE FORAY!
ENGULFING. INSANE.
YOU HEARD OUR BRAVE ALLY SNAKE FACE, MEN OF ETERNIA!
DESTROY THE HORDE! END FEAR!
AS YOU COMMAND, LORD FISTO!
CATASTROPHIC TO ALL IT EMBRACES.
SLAY THE ETERNIAN SCUM!
YES, MISTRESS OCTAVIA!

BUT FOR SOME, THE ONLY THING LEFT IN THE UNIVERSE THAT WILL WREST THE PROUD CITY OF ETERNOS FROM THE VILE OCCUPATION OF THE HORDE.

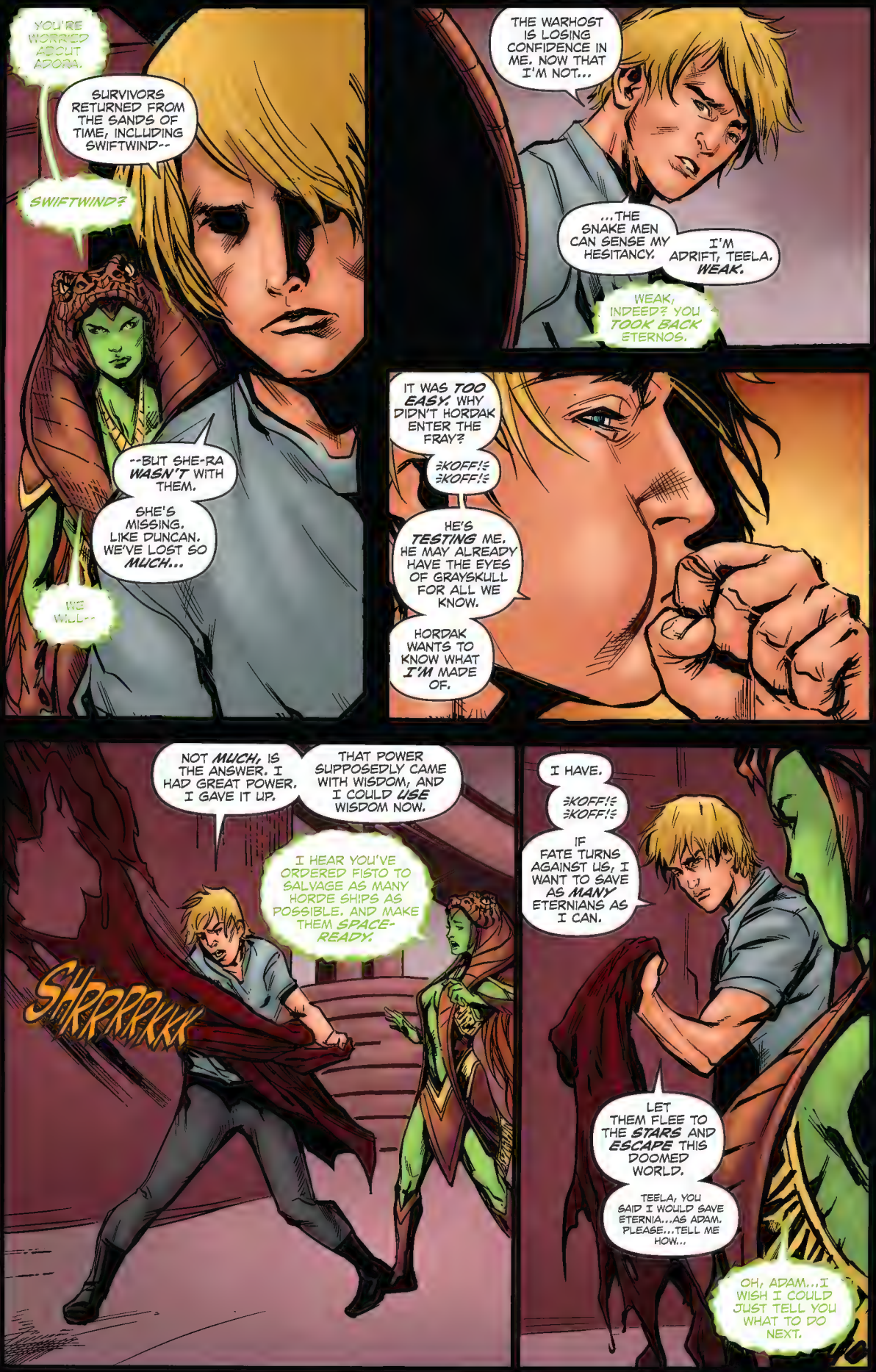
PRESS ON! WE MUST LIBERATE ETERNOS...OR PERISH IN THE ATTEMPT!

THEY WILL NOT FALTER AS THEY SEEK TO TIGHTEN THE NOOSE AROUND CASTLE GRAYSKULL BY FREEING EACH REALM, PROVINCE BY PROVINCE, CITY BY CITY...
FOLLOW ME IN! WE CAN RETAKE THE PALACE!
AYE, KING ADAM!
DO WE ASSAULT THE GATEHOUSE, OR ATTEMPT TO SCALE THE WEST WALL?
...BUT FOR SOME, THE HEART OF ETERNIA BEATS STRONGEST HERE, IN THIS PLACE.
SIR? YOUR ORDERS?
WHO... IS THAT MAN?
MAN, SIR?
HE'S RIGHT THERE, SOLDIER!
SSSSSSO WEAK...

AAAHHHH!
ETERNOS, THE DAY AFTER THE LIBERATION.
FATHER...
GWAAAARRRR!
JUST A DREAM, BATTLE CAT. ANOTHER ONE.
GO BACK TO SLEEP. YOU'VE EARNED YOUR REST.
NOISE. OUTSIDE. THAT SHOUTING...
PLEASE! PLEASE, MERCY!

MERSSSSY? FOR YOU, "LORD IMP"?
YOU WERE REGIONAL GOVERNOR HERE. YOU OPERATED THISSSS FRIGHT ZONE IN HORDAK'SSSS NAME.
NO MERSSSSSY FOR YOU!
I B-BEG YOU--
GO ON! SHOW THE MONSTER JUSTICE! SUMMARY JUSTICE THAT--
HOLD!
THIS IS MOB JUSTICE! DESIST!
WOULD YOU LOWER US TO THE LEVEL OF OUR ENEMIES WITH MILITARY EXECUTIONS?
WE ARE NOT WAR CRIMINALS, WE ARE MASTERS!
WE DO NOT RECOGNISSSSE YOUR AUTHORITY...
DAMN YOU! YOU KNOW WHOM I SPEAK FOR!

HIM?
SSSSSO BE IT. NO EXECUTIONSSSSS... TODAY.
LOOKS LIKE I'M INSPIRING A LOT LESS LOYALTY THESE DAYS--
=KOFF!= =KOFF!= =KOFF!=
YOU SHOULD HAVE MENDOR CHECK OUT THAT COUGH, ADAM.
TEELA.
IT'S JUST A COLD. I HAVEN'T HAD ONE SINCE I FIRST BECAME HE-MAN. THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL CAME WITH HEALTH BENEFITS.
MENDOR WILL SIMPLY TELL ME I NEED BED REST, AND PLY ME WITH NOXIOUS HERBAL TINCTURES.


YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT ADORA.
SURVIVORS RETURNED FROM THE SANDS OF TIME, INCLUDING SWIFTWIND--
SWIFTWIND?
--BUT SHE-RA *WASN'T* WITH THEM.
SHE'S MISSING. LIKE DUNCAN. WE'VE LOST SO *MUCH*...
WE WILL--
THE WARHOST IS LOSING CONFIDENCE IN ME. NOW THAT I'M NOT...
...THE SNAKE MEN CAN SENSE MY HESITANCY.
I'M ADRIFT, TEELA. *WEAK.*
WEAK, INDEED? YOU *TOOK BACK* ETERNOS.
IT WAS *TOO EASY.* WHY DIDN'T HORDAK ENTER THE FRAY?
=KOFF!= =KOFF!=
HE'S *TESTING* ME. HE MAY ALREADY HAVE THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL FOR ALL WE KNOW.
HORDAK WANTS TO KNOW WHAT *I'M* MADE OF.
NOT *MUCH,* IS THE ANSWER. I HAD GREAT POWER. I GAVE IT UP.
THAT POWER SUPPOSEDLY CAME WITH WISDOM, AND I COULD *USE* WISDOM NOW.
I HEAR YOU'VE ORDERED FISTO TO SALVAGE AS MANY HORDE SHIPS AS POSSIBLE. AND MAKE THEM *SPACE-READY.*
SHRRRRKKK
I HAVE.
=KOFF!= =KOFF!=
IF FATE TURNS AGAINST US, I WANT TO SAVE AS *MANY* ETERNIANS AS I CAN.
LET THEM FLEE TO THE *STARS* AND *ESCAPE* THIS DOOMED WORLD.
TEELA, YOU SAID I WOULD SAVE ETERNIA...AS ADAM. PLEASE...TELL ME HOW...
OH, ADAM...I WISH I COULD JUST TELL YOU WHAT TO DO NEXT.

BY THE WILL OF THE GODDESS, IT WAS VITAL FOR YOU TO RELINQUISH THE ENERGY IN YOUR SWORD AND RE-IGNITE MOUNT ZOAR.
JUST AS I RE-LIT THE FLAMES OF SNAKE MOUNTAIN.
BY SHATTERING THE SWORD, AND BY SACRIFICING HE-MAN, YOU MAKE DONE THAT. WHAT HAPPENS NOW, I DO NOT KNOW...
...YOU SEE...YOU BROKE MORE THAN THE SWORD THAT DAY. YOU BROKE DESTINY.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE FUTURE IS NOT SET. NOT EVEN FOR THE GODDESS.
THERE IS ONE THING I KNOW, IN MY HEART.
YOU SHOULD NEVER LET GO OF THIS...
...YOUR JOURNEY ISN'T FINISHED YET.
CASTLE GRAYSKULL
WAR. ETERNAL. FOR SOME, FULL OF GLORY.
HAIL, LORD HORDAK!

THE GLORY OF CONQUERED WORLDS, OF DEATHS METED OUT.
STARTING WITH HIS OWN FATHER, THE FIRST SOUL HE TASTED.
EVERY DEATH WAS WORTH THE EFFORT.
EVERY DEATH WAS LEADING TO THIS DAY.
TAKE ME TO THE FORGE.
MY LORD. KING ADAM HAS TAKEN BACK ETERNOS.
I KNOW. HOW DELIGHTFUL.
I WANTED THE YOUNG KING TO TASTE VICTORY. TO SIT IN HIS FATHER'S CHAIR.
I WANTED HIS PEOPLE TO FEEL ONE LAST SHRED OF HOPE THAT HE WOULD DELIVER.
IT WILL MAKE IT ALL THE SWEETER SNATCHING IT AWAY.
YOU ARE MAGNIFICENT, MY LORD.
I GET BY.

IS EVERYTHING PREPARED?
THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL ARE PRIMED, LORD.
THEY ARE ALIGNED TO RECEIVE THE POWER OF THIS FORGE.
CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS ARMED AND READY.
THEN LET THE HAMMER FALL.
YOU SEE, MY BEAUTIFUL EVIL-LYN?
THE WAR WAS WON THE DAY YOU ARRIVED AT MY GATES.
DESPONDOS. THE VAULT OF SOULS
WAR. ETERNAL.
FOR SOME--TOO MANY--A BLIGHT THAT HAS LED TO NOTHING BUT CEASELESS TORMENT.

FWXXNWKKKTT!!
AND HERE WE ARE, SHE-RA. THE VAULT OF SOULS.
THE HAVOC STAFF, NOW WHOLE, HAS BROUGHT US THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF DIMENSIONS TO THIS PLACE.
THE PLACE DRIPS WITH PAIN.
TOUCH NOT THE WALLS, DEAR GIRL.
THIS IS A PLACE OF DEATH, OF SOULS FORBIDDEN ACCESS TO PARADISE.
I FEEL THE STAFF TREMBLE, DRAWN TO THE WALLS, ACHING TO CONNECT WITH THE SOULS TRAPPED HERE.
MAYBE IT SEARCHES FOR YOUR SOUL?
IF HORDAK SLEW YOU IN THE PAST, AS HE CLAIMED, PERHAPS YOUR SOUL IS TRAPPED IN THIS VAULT TOO?
PERHAPS.
AND PERHAPS ANOTHER IS HERE?
HORDAK RECENTLY KILLED SHADOW WEAVER.
AHH.
THIS I DID NOT KNOW. I HAVE THOUGHT OF HER, OF LATE.
I SUSPECT I OWE HER EVERYTHING.
I THINK SHE WAS THE REASON I WAS ABLE TO BREAK THE TIME-CYCLE.
SHE INVESTED ME WITH MAGIC THAT ALLOWED ME TO SEE MY DESTINY THE MOMENT I SEIZED THE STAFF.

WHY?
SHE WISHED ME TO AVOID THAT FATE. SHE WAS SAVING ME. EVEN THOUGH SHE KNEW SHE WAS DOOMED TO SUFFER AT THE MONSTER'S HANDS.
SHE DID THE SAME FOR ME.
THEN LET US HONOR HER MEMORY BY SAVING HER--
--BY SAVING ALL OF THEM--
--AT LAST!
OHH!
THAT SPELL YOU JUST CAST--
NO SPELL, JUST AN OFFER. A CHANCE TO GET REVENGE ON HORDAK.
THE SOULS GLADLY ACCEPTED.
I HAVE A CERTAIN... RAPPORT WITH THE DEAD.
NOW LET US HURRY BACK.
PRAY TRAP JAW AND BEAST MAN HAVE MANAGED TO GUARD THE WELL OF DARKNESS IN OUR ABSENCE.
TRANSPORT US, THEN.
ONE LAST THING. I BELIEVE THIS BELONGS TO YOU...
... IT FELL FROM YOU WHEN YOU LAY WOUNDED.
YOUR MOTHER, THE QUEEN, MY..."SISTER." SUCH A STRONG WOMAN.
MY LOCKET!

A PITY YOU'LL NEVER GET THE CHANCE TO MEET HER.
WHAT? NO!
DIDN'T I WARN YOU TO STAY BACK?
AAHHH! NO! NOOO!
I DIDN'T TAKE ALL THE SOULS...
...I LEFT THE ONES THAT DESPARA DELIVERED TO HORDAK PERSONALLY.
MORE THAN ENOUGH REVENGE TO GO AROUND.
NOOOOO! NOOOOOOO!
N--
GOODBYE.

Castle Grayskull
CITIZENS OF ETERNIA, HEAR THE VOICE OF HORDAK!

WHAT EVIL IS THIS NOW?
HEAR ME, YOU LAST FREE HEROES OF ETERNIA!
HORDAK!
IN MY MERCY, I GIVE YOU ONE FINAL DAY TO LIVE AS FREE MEN IN THE CITY OF YOUR FATHERS.
TOMORROW, YOU WILL LIVE ON YOUR KNEES.
YOU CALL YOURSELVES MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.
NOW YOU WILL LEARN THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORDS.

SOME OF YOU MAY WISH TO RUN.
IT IS TRUE THAT SOME OF YOU WILL MANAGE TO FLEE THIS WORLD IN A FLEET OF SALVAGED SPACESHIPS.
I HAVE FORESEEN THIS.
YOU WILL FIND A NEW, UNINHABITED WORLD TO CALL HOME...
HOW CAN HE KNOW?
...THIS WORLD. PRIMUS.

THE REFUGEES WILL FLOURISH ON PRIMUS.
OVER GENERATIONS, THEY WILL MULTIPLY, AND TRANSFORM PRIMUS INTO A TECHNOLOGICAL MARVEL.
BEHOLD, THE FUTURE! BEHOLD A SHINING UTOPIA WITH A POPULATION OF BILLIONS!
THE MEMORY OF HORDAK HAS FADED FROM THEIR MINDS.
YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN THINK THEY HAVE ESCAPED MY WRATH...
...THEY ARE WRONG.

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL.

OH, GREAT GODDESS! NO!
ABOMINATION!
HE...HE...
DESTROYED A WORLD!
SNAKE MEN CAN'T SAVE YOU. HE-MAN CAN'T SAVE YOU.
THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM HORDAK.
THE PAST, THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE...I CAN REACH YOU ANYWHERE.
I HAVE CASTLE GRAYSKULL. I HAVE THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.
SURRENDER, KING ADAM...
...I AM MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE!

MHAN

DOMINION

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Pop Mhan**

"HORDAK'S WORDS HAVE ECHOED ACROSS THE COSMOS..."
I AM HORDAK! I AM MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE!
"...AND EVERYWHERE THEY HAVE BEEN HEARD, WORLDS WILL SOON CONVULSE AS FRIGHT ZONES TEAR THROUGH THEM.
"FAR-FLUNG PLANETS THAT HAD NEVER KNOWN THE NAME HORDAK WILL FIND THEMSELVES GRIPPED BY HIS MALEVOLENCE."
"TARMOS, LANNIBAR, MANDO, BELATRAB IV...EVEN EARTH... NOWHERE WILL BE SPARED."
MARLENA! WHAT IS THIS?
HORDAK HAS RISEN!
SHELTER! FIND SHELTER!

"ON EVERY PLANET, AS THE FRIGHT ZONES TIGHTEN THEIR GRIP, GATEWAYS WILL OPEN AND HORDE TROOPERS WILL BEGIN MERCILESS INVASIONS.
"SOME CITIZENS WILL TURN, COLLUDING WITH THEIR NEW MASTERS."
NAMES, WOMAN! WHO ELSE WOULD STAND AGAINST THE HORDE?
I'LL SHOW YOU THOSE MOST LIKELY TO RESIST.
JUST... REMEMBER MY SERVICE TO YOU THIS DAY.
"FEAR IS SPREADING ACROSS THE COSMOS LIKE A CANCER. THE HORDE IS ABOUT TO CLAIM ITS NEW DOMINION, STEP BY STEP.
"SOME SPECIES WILL BE CONQUERED AND DESTROYED. SOME--THOSE WITH EVIL IN THEIR HEARTS--WILL BE SPARED.
"ALL OTHERS WILL SACRIFICE THEIR BODIES AND SOULS TO HORDAK'S NEW EMPIRE.
"THERE WILL BE NO ESCAPE.
"ANY PLANET THAT RESISTS WILL BE OBLITERATED BY CASTLE GRAYSKULL.
"HORDAK HAS SECURED THE MEANS TO CONQUER THE UNIVERSE AND REMAKE ALL OF CREATION IN HIS IMAGE."

THE THRONE ROOM OF ETERNOS...
THIS IS BLEAK, SORCERESS.
IT IS, OLD FRIEND.
"BLEAK" ISSSSS BARELY AN ADEQUATE WORD, MOSSSSSS MAN.
WE MUSSST MOVE TO SSSSTRIKE CASSSTLE GRAYSSSSKULL IMMEDIATELY.
NO, GENERAL RATTLOR, WE HAVE OUR PLAN. CUT THE CASTLE OFF.
LAY SIEGE. STARVE IT UNTIL--
WE HAVE NO TIME, HUMAN! THE DEMON HORDAK HASSSS FORCED YOUR HAND. WE MUST ATTACK DIRECTLY! FULL-ON!
A TREACHEROUS ENDEAVOR...
INDEED. SCANS SHOW THE CASTLE HAS BECOME ENCASED IN A POWERFUL HORDE SHIELDING.
AND IT LIES AT THE HEART OF HORDAK'S FRIGHT ZONE.
THE VERY LAND IS AS EVIL AS HE IS. I CAN FEEL IT. ETERNIA ITSELF WILL FIGHT AGAINST US IF WE ATTACK.
AND THAT'S NOT COUNTING THE HORDE ARMIES GUARDING IT, OR FOUL HORDAK HIMSELF.
WITHOUT HE-MAN TO LEAD US, A DIRECT ASSAULT WOULD BE...SUICIDE.
SORCERESS?
THE FUTURE IS CLOUDED. MY VISIONS ARE BECOMING FRAGMENTED AND CONTRADICTORY...I'M SORRY, MY FRIENDS. I CAN NO LONGER SEE A CERTAIN, CLEAR PATH...

WHY HASN'T HORDAK DESTROYED US ALREADY?
HE HAS THE POWER.
WHY DOES HE NOT USE CASTLE GRAYSKULL TO OBLITERATE US AS HE DID THE POOR PEOPLE OF PRIMUS?
PERHAPS HE DARES NOT TURN THE CASTLE'S POWER ON ETERNIA ITSELF?
IT'S BECAUSE HE WANTS ME ON MY KNEES.
MY LORD KING? WHAT DID YOU SSSSAY?
HE WANTS ME ON MY KNEES!
HE WANTS THE HEIR OF GRAYSKULL TO BOW BEFORE HIM!
HE WANTS REVENGE AND NONE OF THIS WILL END UNTIL HE HAS IT!
ADAM!
NONE OF IT.
:KOFF!:
:KOFF!:
:KOFF!:
:KOFF!:
MY LORD--
GET OUT! ALL OF YOU!

YOU'RE CONSIDERING SURRENDER, AREN'T YOU?
ADAM?
CASTLE GRAYSKULL
HOROKOTHAN!
SERPENORATH!
ETERNAROTH!
THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL...
HOROKOTHAN!
SERPENORATH!
ETERNAROTH!
WHAT IS IT THAT THE MYSTICS CHANT, GREAT LORD?
OLD WORDS, EVIL-LYN. TIME-LOST WORDS OF MAGIC.
THEY WELCOME IN THE AGE OF HOROKOTH.

I HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THINGS MY FATHER COULD NEVER DREAM OF.
I HAVE CONQUERED THE UNIVERSE IN THE NAME OF THE HORDE, AND ALL FROM THE HOME OF MY MOST HATED ENEMY, KING GRAYSKULL.
YOU ARE KING NOW, GREAT HORDAK.
AND A KING MUST TAKE A QUEEN.
MY LORD?
I HAD A CONSORT ONCE, A WEAVER OF SHADOWS, BUT SHE IS NO MORE.
CAN YOU FEEL IT? IT WAS NO ACCIDENT YOU CAME HERE.
THE POWER COMPELLED YOU.
IT IS MY DESTINY.
Y-YES, I COULD NOT EXPLAIN MY FEELINGS, BUT NOW--
NOW I SEE YOU. NOW I SEE THE FIRES OF THE FORGE.
YOUR DESTINY, INDEED, IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE.
HOROKOTHAN!
SERPENORATH!
ETERNAROTH!

HOROKOTHAN! SERPENO-- EAAARRGHH!
WHAT IS THIS MADNESS?
NOOO! NUHHYYAAAAGGH!
EARGHH!
AAIGHH!
DEATH TO HORDAK!
REVENGE! LET HIM SUFFER AS WE SUFFERED!
WE CLAIM OUR VENGEA-- AAAAGHH!
ENOUGH OF THIS DEVILRY!

TURN ON ME, WOULD YOU?
PERISH FOR THAT!
MYSTICS! ATTEND ME!
WE WILL IDENTIFY THE ORIGIN OF THIS SORCEROUS CORRUPTION!
HOROKOTHAN.
SERPENORATH.
ETERNAROTH.

CASTLE COMMAND CENTER...
SOMEONE EXPLAIN THIS! MODULOK!
DEATH TO HORDAK!
DEATH TO HORDAK!
THOOM
THOOM
IT HAD BETTER, MY LORD.
YES, IT HAD BETTER...
KLEK
SHIELD - DEACTIVATED

DEATH! VENGEANCE!
THEN I WILL SLAY THEM ALL, IF NEED BE.
HOROKOTHAN! SERPENORATH! ETERNAROTH!
HOROKOTHAN!

HOLD THE TRAITORS BACK, GRIZZLOR!
STRIKE IN THE NAME OF HORDAK, MULTI-BOT!
WE--
DON'T STAND A CHANCE!
BEAST MAN? TRAP JAW? HOW-- EAARRGHHH!
UUGGHHKKK!
HOROKOTHAN! SERPENORATH! ETERNAROTH!
WHO ORCHESTRATES THIS?
SHOW YOURSELF! WHO IS MY TRUE ENEMY HERE?

I HAVE STOLEN THE SOULS FROM YOUR VAULT, HORDAK.
NOW I *RETURN* THEM TO YOU.
WHY, THAT WOULD BE *ME*.
"IT WASN'T ENOUGH THAT YOU CLAIMED THE *SOULS* OF YOUR VICTIMS DOWN THE EONS. YOU REPURPOSED THEIR BODIES, TOO.
"YOU TURNED THEM INTO *CYBORG SLAVE MACHINES*. NOW THEIR SPIRITS INHABIT THEM AGAIN...
...THEY ARE *FREED* FROM YOUR THRALL.
AND THEY WANT NOTHING MORE THAN REVENGE AGAINST THE ONE WHO *BRUTALIZED* THEM!
DEATH TO HORDAK! LET HIM SUFFER AS WE HAVE SUFFERED!

INGENIOUS. YOU TURN MY POWER *AGAINST* ME, BUT ONLY BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO MIGHT OF YOUR *OWN* THAT CAN MATCH MINE.
THIS *ENDS.*
UGHNNKK!
THERE IS *NO* STOPPING ME, SKELETOR.
I WIELD THE *FULL POWER* OF GRAYSKULL... *EVERYTHING* YOU EVER DESIRED.
DESPITE YOUR TRICKS, YOU ARE A WEAKLING *BASTARD* PRINCE PINING FOR A POWER THAT WILL *NEVER* BE YOURS!
GNNGGG-GG-GG!
GGHHKK! GHHKK!
THIS IS YOUR *FINAL* BATTLE, SKELETOR.
HOW *FITTING* THAT YOU SHOULD PERISH TRYING TO CLAIM THIS CASTLE ONE LAST TIME.
LET THE LAST THING YOU WITNESS BE THE *BIRTH* OF THE NEW AGE.
MY NEW AGE.
ARE YOU READY...*MY QUEEN?*

YES, I AM THE SORCERESS NOW.
I AM THE SORCERESS OF HOROKOTH.
I HAVE THE POWER.
THE AGE OF HOROKOTH BEGINS!
AS FORETOLD IN THE ANCIENT HORDE PROPHESIES, "ONE FROM OUR RANKS SHALL FIND THE GODDESS AND BE CHOSEN AS--"

--NNNGGHHHHH!
W-WHAT? NYYAAGHH! WHAT IS THIS?
YOUR ARROGANCE HAS ALWAYS BEEN YOUR UNDOING.

DIE!

AH, THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL.
HOW SWEET.
YOU HAVE SERVED ME WELL. ALL OF YOU.
AS PROMISED, TRI-KLOPS-- YOUR FEE.
YOUR SERVICES ARE WELL WORTH THE ADDITIONAL PAYMENT.
I'D SPEND IT QUICKLY, THOUGH, IF I WERE YOU.
YES, MY LORD.
MY EVIL-LYN. YOU HAVE NEVER LOOKED MORE RAVISHING.
DEATH BECOMES YOU.
I AM WHAT I HAVE BECOME. THE VOICE OF THE GODDESS. THE FACE OF THE NEW AGE.
SKELETOR... PRINCE KELDOR... ARE YOU READY?

HOROKOTH HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...
...YOU, THE MASTER OF DEATH.
PALACE OF ETERNOS...
YOU CAN'T SURRENDER, ADAM.
SO YOU ADVISE ATTACKING GRAYSKULL DIRECTLY?
NO. YOU SHOULD SEEK OUT...ZODAC.
ZODAC?
THE FUTURE IS GETTING MURKIER TO SEE. WE STAND AT THE CROSSROADS OF FATE, WHERE ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.
ZODAC IS THE MASTER OF DESTINY. HE MAY KNOW WHAT TO DO.
SEEK ZODAC? AND WHERE IS HE? WHY HAS HE NOT REVEALED HIMSELF?
AND WHERE IS YOUR GODDESS? WHY DOESN'T SHE HELP US?

THE OLD GODS HAVE FAILED US, TEELA. WE LIVE OR DIE ON OUR OWN.
NOW LEAVE ME.
YOU'RE RIGHT, NEPHEW. WE LIVE OR DIE ON OUR OWN.
IT'S ALL COME DOWN TO US.
WHO SPEAKS?
SKELETOR! SO...
...YOU'RE ALIVE.
OF COURSE. I AM BEYOND DEATH. BUT YOU LOOK TO BE AT DEATH'S DOOR.
NOT YOURSELF THESE DAYS?
AH, I SEE. FITTING. A BROKEN SWORD FOR A BROKEN KING.
SUCH A PITY. I HAD HOPED THAT YOU WOULD WITNESS WHAT COMES NEXT THROUGH HE-MAN'S EYES.
I AM HE-MAN.
I SUPPOSE SO. DEEP DOWN, WHERE IT COUNTS.
DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME WE EVER FOUGHT? THE FIRST TIME YOU HELD THAT SWORD ALOFT AND SPOKE THE WORDS OF POWER?
IT WAS HERE, IN THIS VERY THRONE ROOM. I ASKED, "WHO ARE YOU?"
I'M STILL WAITING FOR THE ANSWER.

WHO ARE YOU TO BE MORE WORTHY OF GRAYSKULL'S POWER THAN ME? YOU, THE WAYWARD PRINCE?
FOR YEARS I FOUGHT IN VAIN TO WREST THE POWER FROM YOU, BELIEVING THAT I WAS THE HE-MAN OF PROPHESY.
BUT THE GODDESS CHOSE YOU.
WHY? PERHAPS I WILL NEVER GET MY ANSWER.
BUT I NO LONGER CARE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, I KNOW WHO I AM.
WHOM THE GODDESS CHOSE ME TO BE.
HORDAK THOUGHT TOO SMALL. THERE WILL BE NO SURRENDER. NO CONQUEST OF WORLDS. NO EMPIRE.
WHAT'S COMING IS FAR WORSE...
...I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT.
IT'S NOT OVER YET, SKELETOR.
HAH. VALIANT TO THE LAST. EVEN WITHOUT YOUR GREAT STRENGTH.
VERY WELL, COME FACE ME, THEN. FACE ME IF YOU DARE, "HE-MAN"...
...YOU WILL FIND ME AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL. IN THE END, IT ALL COMES DOWN TO US.
YES. YOU..
...AND ME.

MHANO

DEFIANCE

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Pop Mhan**

THE PALACE OF ETERNOS.
WARRIORS, COMRADES... WE MUST RISE TO FACE OVERWHELMING ODDS.
OUR ANCIENT ENEMY HAS SEIZED THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...
"...BUT WE WILL NOT SUBMIT.
"WE WILL NOT ACCEPT THAT THIS IS THE END.
WE WERE BORN AND BRED AS WARRIORS. WE WERE FORGED IN THE WHITE-HOT FIRES OF ETERNIA TO FIGHT.
TO FIGHT THE FOE. TO FIGHT THE ODDS. TO FIGHT WHEN ALL SEEMS LOST.
"TO FIGHT ON, ALWAYS AND FOREVER; TO OUR LAST BREATH.
SO WE WILL, THIS DAY, TAKE OUR FIGHT TO THE VERY GATES OF GRAYSKULL.
"WE WILL ARMOR OURSELVES AGAINST FATE, AND OUR FOE'S MALICE...

...AND WE WILL PREVAIL.
WE WILL GIVE OUR LIVES. WE WILL GIVE THAT LAST BREATH TO SAVE THE WORLD.
"TO SAVE ALL WORLDS.
WE WILL LIVE AND DIE AS BROTHERS.
MEN OF SERPOS! MEN OF ZOAR! TODAY, WE ARE ONE! TODAY, WE TAKE BACK WHAT IS OURS!
"WE TAKE BACK GRAYSKULL!
ARE YOU WITH ME?
AYE!
KING ADAM!
KING ADAM!
KING ADAM!

I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE YOUR ANSWER.

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.
"THE FEARED LEGIONS OF THE HORDE WITHER AND PERISH...
...THEIR STOLEN SOULS DRAIN AWAY AND RETURN TO ME.
TO NOURISH ME, AND EMPOWER THE HAVOC STAFF.
IT IS A GREAT DAY, LORD SKELETOR.
IT IS, INDEED, MY NEWLY-FORGED PRIESTESS.
GREAT LORD, AN ARMY COMES. I CAN SENSE ITS APPROACH.
LET IT COME.
LET IT SHRED ITSELF GETTING THROUGH HORDAK'S FRIGHT ZONE.
BUT YOU DRAW THE SOULS OF THESE WARRIORS BACK INTO YOUR STAFF AND LEAVE THEM LIFELESS.
WON'T YOU NEED TROOPS TO FACE THE COMING ONSLAUGHT?
I NEED SOULS, BUT NOT AS SOLDIERS.
THIS WAR IS NO LONGER ABOUT SOLDIERS...

...EXCEPT FOR ONE.
WAR WRAITH.
I AWAIT YOUR COMMAND, LORD.
ENTER THE FRIGHT ZONE. FIND AND KILL THE ARMY'S LEADER.
KILL ADAM. CUT OUT HIS HEART FOR ME.
CAN YOU DO THIS, WAR WRAITH?
YES, MASTER.
A TEAR? NOT FOR ADAM, I TRUST?
NO. I WEEP FOR THE GODDESS.
I SENSE HESITANCY IN HER. CONFLICT.
ANOTHER PART OF THE GODDESS IS WEEPING OVER THE END THAT IS TO COME.
IT IS AN ANCIENT PART OF HER, AND IT IS FIGHTING TO RESIST THE DOOM AT HAND.
CAN YOUR GODDESS HEAR ME NOW?
TH-THROUGH ME, YES.
THEN LET HER HEED THIS...

HEAR MY WORDS, GODDESS.
THE END IS COMING, AND THERE IS NO GOING BACK.
YOU CHOSE ME TO BRING THIS MOMENT ABOUT, BUT I AM NOT YOUR SERVANT...
...I AM YOUR MURDERER.
SOON, ALL YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE AT THE GATES OF THIS FORTRESS, GODDESS, AND THEY WILL CRY FOR ME TO SPARE THEM.
AND I WILL TELL THEM WHAT I TELL YOU NOW...
SNHHF
...NO.
IF I CANNOT RULE THIS UNIVERSE, I WILL SLAY IT.
BOW BEFORE ME.
NOW GO, EVIL-LYN.
FIND THIS ANCIENT ASPECT OF THE GODDESS YOU SERVE, AND ERADICATE IT.
THERE WILL BE NO RESISTANCE. THERE WILL BE NO CONFLICT.
YES...
...MASTER.

DAWN IN THE FRIGHT ZONE. THE GROUND SHUDDERS AT THE SOUND OF TITANIC FOOTFALLS.
THE DRAGON WALKERS MARCH TO WAR.
DESIGNED BY THE WAR-SMITH, MAN-AT-ARMS, YEARS BEFORE TO EVOKE THE PRIMAL POWER OF THE PRETERNIAN AGE, THEY ARE ARMED WITH ALL THE TECHNOLOGICAL MIGHT ONLY DUNCAN COULD DEVISE.
KING ADAM UNEARTHED THEM FROM RANDOR'S HIDDEN ARMORIES BENEATH ETERNOS.
THEY, HE BELIEVES, CAN WITHSTAND THE HORRORS OF THE FRIGHT ZONE. AND DELIVER HIS ARMY TO THE BATTLEGROUND.

ADVANCE. FULL SPEED.
MY LORD KING, I CONFESS IT TROUBLES ME THAT YOU WEAR THE BATTLEGEAR OF THE SNAKE MEN.
I WILL FIGHT WITH THEM, BUT I HAVE NO WISH TO SERVE UNDER THEM.
THE SNAKE MEN ARE PRIMITIVE, FISTO. SYMBOLS ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM, AND I NEED TO INSPIRE THEIR DEVOTION. THIS NIGHT MORE THAN EVER.
THEY'RE WILLING TO DIE FOR US. IS IT SO UNTHINKABLE TO SHOW THAT WE ARE WILLING TO LIVE FOR THEM?
IF WE ARE VICTORIOUS, THE WORLD WILL LOOK VERY DIFFERENT TOMORROW.
MY KING! THE GROUND BENEATH US IS STARTING TO SHIFT!
THE FRIGHT ZONE SENSES OUR INTRUSION. THE LAND ITSELF IS ABOUT TO BECOME OUR ENEMY.
WHHHRRR
BEWARE!
ALL WALKERS ENGAGE TRAVERSING GEARS!
WHHHRRR
WHHHRRR

BRIDGE THE CHASMS! ADVANCE!

"THE FRIGHT ZONE IS FIGHTING BACK, LORD KING! NEW SPIRES ARE SPROUTING!

"THE WALKER *FORKED-TONGUE* IS *CLOVEN IN TWO!*

WALKER *SCALED-HIDE* TO COMMAND! OUR TRAVERSE GEARS ARE *SLIPPING!* MY KING, WE--

EAAARRRGRHHH!!

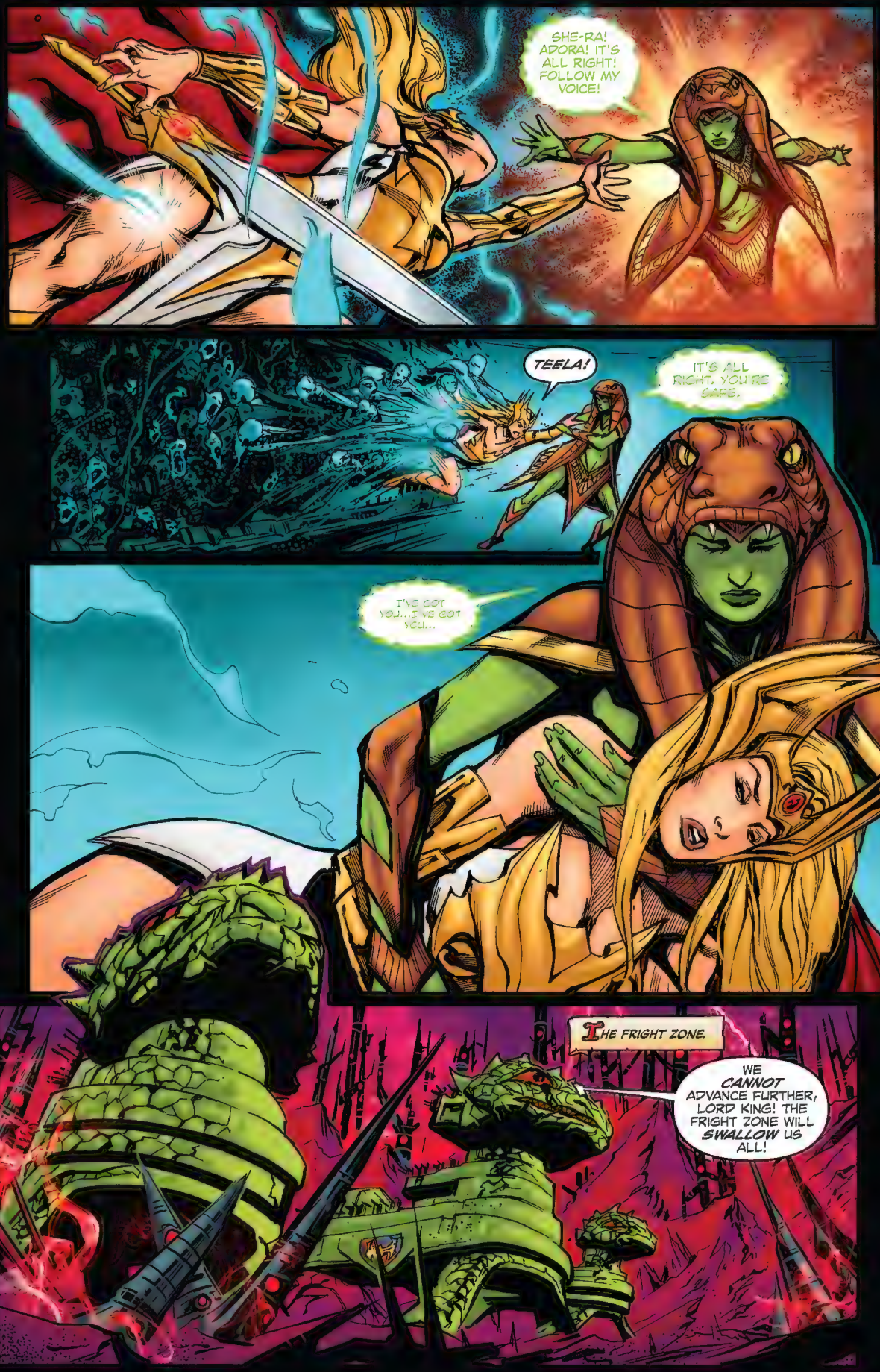
GUN CREWS! TARGET THE SPIRES! *BRING THEM DOWN!*

FTOOOM FTOOOM

CH-KOOOOM

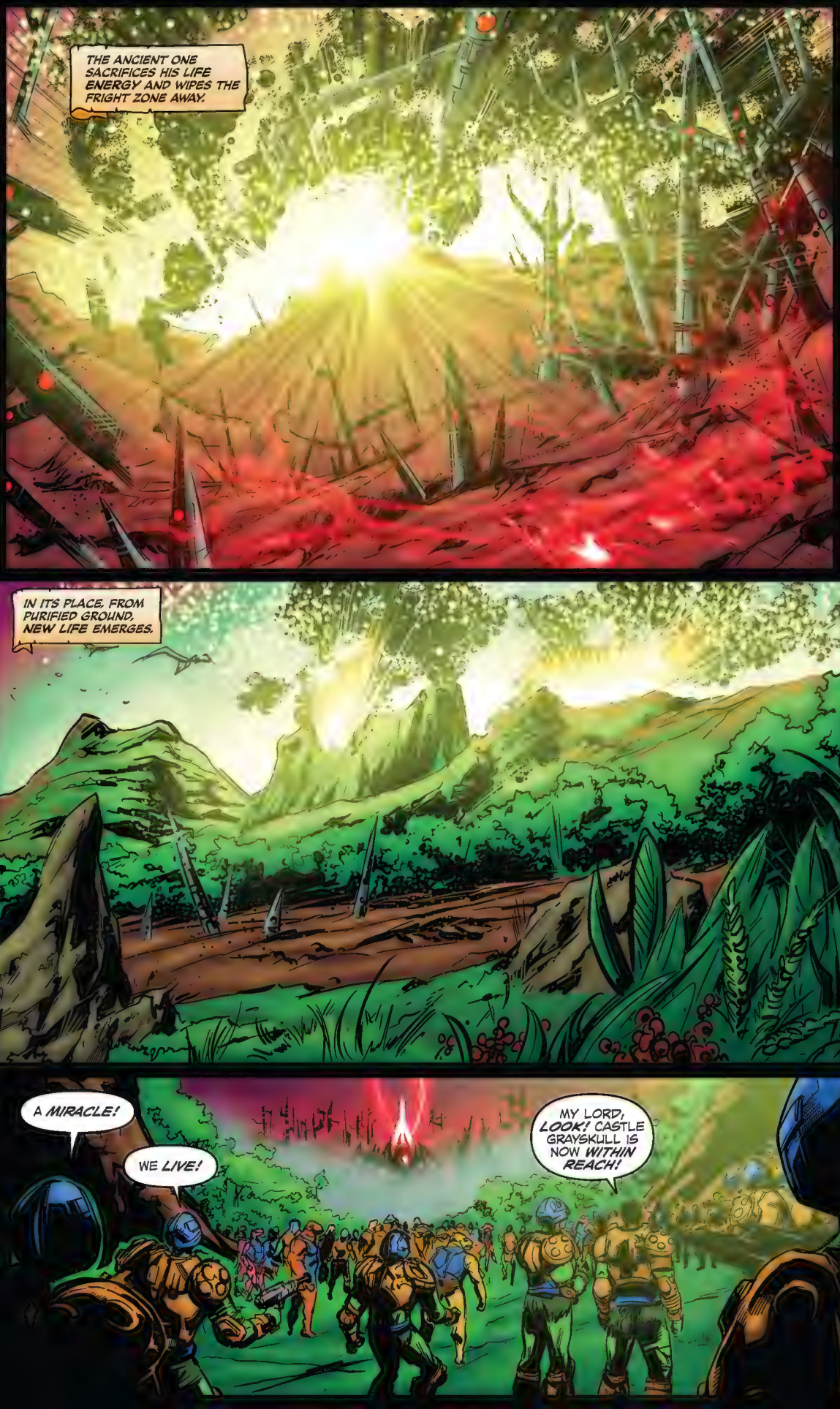
KTHOOOM
MY LORD! INCOMING FIRE!
EARGH!
SSSSNIPER! GET BEHIND THE SSSSHIE--
CHOOOM
DEATH HAS FOUND YOU. DEATH SEES YOU.

WORLDS AWAY, IN A VOID OF LOST SOULS...
...SHE-RA SCREAMS. THE SPECTRES OF DESPARA'S VICTIMS ASSAULT HER. WITH EACH STRIKE, SHE REMEMBERS THEIR NAMES, THEIR HOPES, THEIR DREAMS...
...THEIR TERROR AS SHE MURDERED THEM IN HORDAK'S NAME.
...NORWIN...ARKEON... FLUTTERINA... COUNTLESS MORE...
...SHE DOES NOT RESIST. SHE KNOWS SHE DESERVES THIS. IT IS HER PUNISHMENT.
LET IT BE ETERNAL.
SHE-RA, ADORA, DESPARA...NO PART OF HER CAN ATONE FOR WHAT SHE DID.
ADORA...DO NOT DESPAIR. YOUR STORY IS NOT YET TOLD.
WH-WHO ARE YOU?
YOU WILL KNOW WHEN YOU FIND ME, SHE-RA.
AT THE END OF THE DARKNESS, THERE IS ALWAYS THE LIGHT OF HOPE.
NO! D-DON'T GO!


SHE-RA! ADORA! IT'S ALL RIGHT! FOLLOW MY VOICE!
TEELA!
IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU'RE SAFE.
I'VE GOT YOU...I'VE GOT YOU...
THE FRIGHT ZONE.
WE CANNOT ADVANCE FURTHER, LORD KING! THE FRIGHT ZONE WILL SWALLOW US ALL!

WHAT IS THIS?
A WIND RAIDER? COMING FOR ME, NO DOUBT.
BUT IT IS NOT.
ABOARD THE WIND RAIDER, THE ANCIENT AND MIGHTY MOSS MAN MAKES HIS FINAL RESOLUTION.
THE FRIGHT ZONE IS WORSE THAN THEY COULD HAVE IMAGINED. TO REACH GRAYSKULL NOW, IT WILL TAKE A MIRACLE.
THE ACT OF A GOD.
TO THE LAST BREATH, YOU SAID, MY KING.
I GIVE YOU MINE.
MOSS MAN... NO!
THEY WATCH, IN DREAD, AS ONE OF THE OLDEST LIVING BEINGS ON ETERNIA PLUNGES INTO THE HEART OF EVIL...

...AND ANNIHILATES IT.


THE ANCIENT ONE SACRIFICES HIS LIFE ENERGY AND WIPES THE FRIGHT ZONE AWAY.
IN ITS PLACE, FROM PURIFIED GROUND, NEW LIFE EMERGES.
A MIRACLE!
WE LIVE!
MY LORD, LOOK! CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS NOW WITHIN REACH!

I SEE IT.
THANKS TO THE SACRIFICE OF AN OLD FRIEND, OUR WAY IS CLEAR TO--
--NNHHHG!
MY KING..?
MY LORD, ARE YOU WELL?
L-LEAVE ME, RATTLOR...
I WILL NOT... I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
WHO YOU REALLY ARE.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORN ADAM'S SSSKIN, LORD HSSSS?
SINCE HE TOOK ETERNOS. BUT I'VE BEEN WITH YOU ALL ALONG.
I SSSUSPECTED.
:NGGGHHH!:
S-SOMETHING IS WRONG, THOUGH!
I HAVE NEVER FELT SUCH PAIN AFTER CONSUMING A VICTIM!
THERE ISSS SSSOMETHING SSSPECIAL ABOUT ADAM. A TOUCH OF THE GODDESSSS.
HE ISSS UNLIKE YOUR OTHER VICTIMSSSS.
HE ISSS YOUR BETTER.
I-IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE CHOSEN YOUR SIDE.
I HAVE. HE PROVED HISSSS WORTH. A TRUE LEADER. I SSSSSTAND TO AVENGE HISSS NAME.
AND ALL OTHERSSS SSSHALL KNOW OF YOUR TRICKERY AND--
THE SNAKE MEN HAVE BEEN MINE SINCE THE DAWN OF ETERNIA.
HSSSSSSSSS!
NYEEAARGH!!

YOU LIVE AND DIE AT MY COMMAND.
=UGHHKK!=
WELL, WELL, WELL...
...YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH THE FRIGHT ZONE ALIVE.

SKELETOR SENDS HIS REGARDS.
D-DUNCAN...?

MHAN©

THE UNKINDEST CUT

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Pop Mhan**

DURING THE BATTLE TO RECONQUER MOUNT ZOAR AT THE END OF THE WAR WITH HORDAK...
ROBOTO! THRUSTERS HAVE FAILED!
ROBOTO! ANSWER ME!
...DUNCAN, THE MAN-AT-ARMS, PERISHED.
ROBOTO! REBOOT THE THRUSTERS!
WE'RE CRASH-DIVING TOWARDS ETERNIA!
F-FUNCTION D-DISABLED! I...I AM S-SORRY...
THIS IS HOW THE GREAT WARRIOR DIED.
REROUTE ALL SYSTEMS TO THRUSTER REPAIR!
EVERYTHING! EVEN LIFE SUPPORT!
...N-NOT ENOUGH TIME. I AM U-USING MY REMAINING P-POWER TO FOCUS AN INERTIAL DAMPENING FIELD AROUND YOU.
THIS W-WILL PROTECT YOU FROM IMPACT.
BUT YOU WILL BE UNPROTECTED!
ROBOTO, YOU WILL DIE! I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO SACRIFICE YOURS--
MY A.I. IS B-BASED ON YOUR MENTAL ENGRAMS. I AM INCAPABLE OF NOT SACRIFICING MYSELF.
BECAUSE YOU WOULD D-DO THE SAME FOR ME.
ROBOTO!
GOOD-BYE... FATHER.
IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR.

THIS IS HOW HE DIED...
...AND WHAT BECAME OF HIM IN DEATH.
INTERESTING...
CRASH SITE...
...THE TAR SWAMPS OF ETERNIA.

THE HUNTER HUNTS HIS PREY. HIS TECHNO-VISION DETECTS THE DYING ENERGY SIGNATURE FROM THE WRECKAGE...
...DYING, BUT NOT DEAD.
NOT YET...
...THIS IS NO ORDINARY PREY...
WHAT? EMPTY?
BOOBY TRAP!
UGHNN!
KABOOM

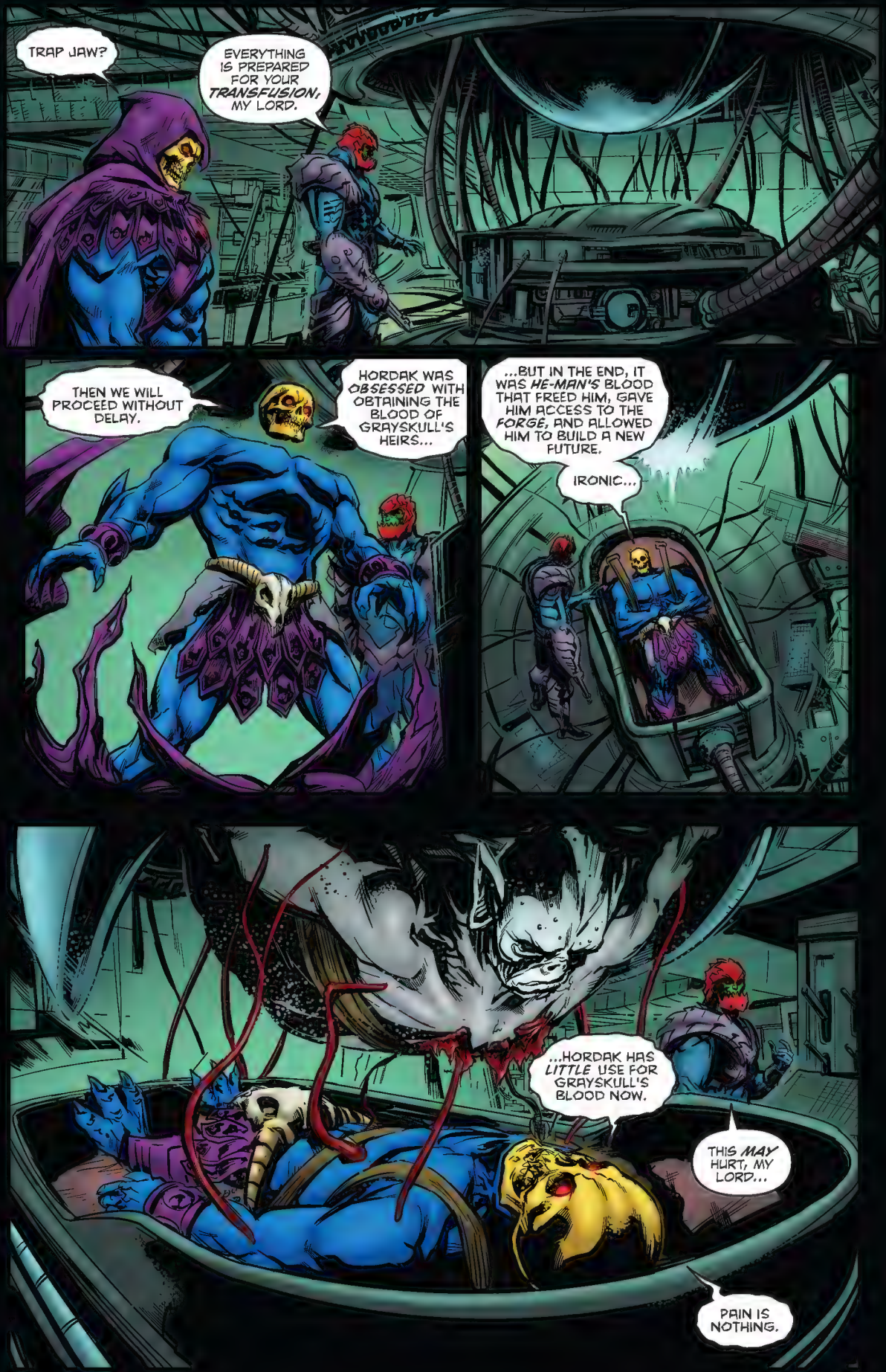
TRI-KLOPS.
I HEARD YOUR CLUMSY APPROACH THROUGH THE SWAMP.
IT WAS EASY TO WIRE A DEVICE TO TRICK YOUR VISOR.
YOU ARE THE FAMED MASTER HUNTER.
LET'S SEE HOW WELL YOU DO AGAINST THE MASTER OF WARFARE!
UGHHNK!
YOU ARE UNARMED.
ARRGH!
DON'T WORRY, I'LL MAKE IT A FAIR FIGHT.

I AM A LIVING WEAPON.
MY MASTER'S BLADE.
UGHHNK!
SPEAKING OF BLADES...
AGHHHHH!
...THANK YOU.
BY THE WAY, THAT PATCH OF SWAMP...?
...I TOOK THE TROUBLE TO LACE IT WITH MOTION-SENSITIVE BOMBLETS.
KOOOOM
BE PREPARED. THAT'S MY MOTTO.

YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT!
I OUTCLASS YOU!
AYE, YOU'RE STRONGER THAN ME.
BETTER ARMED--
I WILL KILL YOU!
NOT IF YOU CAN'T SEE ME.
WHHSWKKGH
YEEAARRGH!
NO!
NYYAARAGHHH!
NO!!!
AS I THOUGHT. CYBERNETIC IMPLANTS.
YOU ARE BLIND UNDER THAT RIDICULOUS MASK.
CONTEST OVER.
WHHHNNKKK

NOW, TO FIND A ROUTE OUT OF HERE.
INTRIGUING TECH. PERHAPS I CAN REWIRE IT AND MAKE A TRACKER TO GUIDE ME OUT OF THIS HELLHOLE...
BLIND? YES.
DEAF? NO.
WHAT TH--?
KLEK
YOU TALK TOO MUCH!
WHWNCHH

CASTLE GRAYSKULL.
AFTER THE DEFEAT OF HORDAK...
AN INTERESTING TROPHY, TRI-KLOPS...
...YOU SAY YOU BROUGHT IT HERE FOR HORDAK?
INDEED, DARK LORD.
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT INTEREST HIM.
HE DECIDED TO USE THE SLIME PIT TO CORRUPT MY GIFT.
APPARENTLY, THE SLUDGE HAS MYSTICAL PROPERTIES.
ON CONTACT WITH THE SKIN, IT TURNS PRISONERS INTO MIND-SLAVES AND--
SPARE ME THE LECTURE. I KNOW HOW IT WORKS.
I HELPED HORDAK BUILD IT.
MMNN... NHHHG... NNHH...
ANY INTEL THAT THE VAUNTED MAN-AT-ARMS MIGHT HAVE OFFERED BECAME IRRELEVANT ONCE HORDAK HAD THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.
HE LEFT HIM DOWN HERE TO ROT. MAYBE YOU HAVE A USE FOR HIM?
PERHAPS.
LORD SKELETOR!


TRAP JAW?
EVERYTHING IS PREPARED FOR YOUR *TRANSFUSION*, MY LORD.
THEN WE WILL PROCEED WITHOUT DELAY.
HORDAK WAS *OBSESSED* WITH OBTAINING THE BLOOD OF GRAYSKULL'S HEIRS...
...BUT IN THE END, IT WAS *HE-MAN'S* BLOOD THAT FREED HIM, GAVE HIM ACCESS TO THE *FORGE*, AND ALLOWED HIM TO BUILD A NEW FUTURE.
IRONIC...
...HORDAK HAS *LITTLE* USE FOR GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD NOW.
THIS *MAY* HURT, MY LORD...
PAIN IS NOTHING.

NGHHHH!
NNH! Y-YOU HAVE D-DONE WELL, TRI-KLOPS.
I INDEED H-HAVE A USE FOR MAN-AT-ARMS.
LET HIM SPILL MORE OF ADAM'S BLOOD FOR ME...
"...AND LET IT BE THE UNKINDEST CUT OF ALL."
NOW...
SKELETOR SENDS HIS REGARDS.
NHHGN...

S-SO MUCH FOR IT ALL COMING D-DOWN TO *ME* AND *HIM*...
SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU KNOWN OUR LORD TO PLAY FAIR?
WHKKRRKKK
AGHHH!
UGHHN!
KRAKK
YOU'RE WEAK. PATHETIC.
I WISH YOU COULD FEEL HOW *LIBERATING* IT IS TO BE REBORN IN SKELETOR'S GRACE.
WHHNNKK
AGGHH! D-DUNCAN!

IT'S LIKE A VEIL HAS BEEN LIFTED. I WAS BLIND. NOW I SEE.
D-DUNCAN! PLEASE!
REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!
WHO I AM?
I WAS A KILLER, ADAM! YOUR KILLER! YOUR SOLDIER!
I SPENT MY LIFE DEVISING WEAPONS FOR YOUR FATHER, ALL IN THE NAME OF PEACE!
HYPOCRISY!
NOW I DON'T HAVE TO HIDE HOW MUCH PRIDE I FEEL WATCHING WHAT MY DEVICES DO TO PEOPLE.

PRIDE. AND PLEASURE.
FTOOOMFF
ARRGHHH!
SIMPLY PATHETIC.
YOU REMEMBER NOTHING OF THE TRAINING I GAVE YOU.
YOU ARE UNWORTHY OF RANDOR'S THRONE.
OF GRAYSKULL'S POWER.
WITHOUT HE-MAN'S STRENGTH, WHAT ARE YOU?
THE COWARD SON OF A KING? THE HALF-BREED FAILURE OF A WRETCHED EARTH-WOMAN?
TH-THAT'S SKELETOR T-TALKING...
THERE IS NO DISTINCTION.
I AM MY MASTER'S BLADE!

THE WELL OF DARKNESS...
H-HOW DID YOU EVER F-FIND ME, TEELA...?
EASILY, SWO-RA...
...WITH THE HELP OF A FRIEND.
S-SWIFT WIND!
I CAN NORMALLY SENSE YOU AND HE-MAN THROUGH YOUR BONDS, BUT YOURS HAS GONE DARK.
SOME MYSTICAL VEIL IS CLOAKING YOU FROM MY SIGHT.
SKELETOR'S DOING, N-NO DOUBT.
THEN I REJOICE THAT SKELETOR IS UNAWARE OF YOUR BOND WITH ANIMALS.
WHEN I DISCOVERED THAT SWIFT WIND HAD SURVIVED THE SANDS OF TIME, I AMPLIFIED HIS CONNECTION WITH YOU AND FOLLOWED HIM AS HE TRIED TO FIND YOU.
THE TRAIL LED ME TO THE WELL OF DARKNESS.
I COULD FEEL MANOC MAGIC IN THE AIR AND INTUITED THE REST.
I'M SUCH A FOOL, TEELA.
I LET SKELETOR DECEIVE ME...
...I REALLY THOUGHT HE WANTED TO BE REDEEMED.

BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT YOU DREAM OF FOR YOURSELF, SHE-RA. BUT YOU ARE NOT THE SAME.
YOU WERE A VICTIM OF HORDAK.
SKELETOR CHOSE HIS FATE.
REMEMBER THAT.
WE MUST HURRY TO ADAM NOW.
I FEAR FOR HIM. I HAVE LOST MY ABILITY TO GUIDE HIM.
HE'S HELPLESS, ADORA, AND IT'S ALL MY--
NO! IT CANNOT BE! BY THE GODDESS--
--EVIL-LYN?!
YOUR EFFORTS ARE IN VAIN, TEELA.
THE TWINS OF POWER HAVE LOST ALREADY. THEY CAN NO LONGER PUSH BACK THE DARKNESS!
THE RIGHTFUL SON OF GRAYSKULL HAS TAKEN HIS PLACE AT LAST!
NOT... SKELETOR?
YES...

...THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM HOROKOTH!
FLY ON! FIND AETHA!!
JOIN HIM WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
I HOPE TO SEE YOU BOTH AGAIN ONE DAY!
TEELA!
TEELA! NO!

FLY, SHE-RA! FLY!
GO, SWIFT WIND!
TAKE ME TO ADAM! TAKE ME TO GRAYSKULL!
SWIFT WIND OBEYS, BUT NEITHER SHE-RA NOR HER LOYAL STEED SEE...
...THAT IN THE NIGHTMARE SKY BEHIND THEM, THE DARK RIDERS ARE IN PURSUIT.

SKELETOR DIPPED THIS BLADE IN A POISON *TAILORED* TO YOUR BLOOD.
IT WILL STOP YOUR HEART IN *SECONDS.*
NICE TRY.
BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOUR LORD...
HOW THE--?!
EAARRRGHHH!
...ADAM IS ALREADY DEAD.

YOU FOOL, DUNCAN.
YOU POOR FOOL.
YOU UNDERSTAND NOTHING. I--
ARGHHH!!
THAT PAIN! ONCE AGAIN!
YOU'RE DEAD! DEAD, CURSE YOU!
WHY WON'T YOU DIE?!

"WHY WON'T YOU DIE?"

SHATTERED

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Szymon Kudranski**

EVIL-LYN, SORCERESS OF HOROKOTH, THE WINGS OF HER MONSTROUS MAGICAL FORM SPREAD WIDE AND BLOTTING OUT THE SKY.
TEELA, SORCERESS OF SERPOS, THE JAWS OF HER SPELL-CONJURED GUISE DRIPPING WITH VENOM.
TWO SORCERESSES. TWO MYSTICAL AVATARS. TWO SIDES OF THE SAME GODDESS.
ONE BATTLE TO THE DEATH.

THE END IS COMING, ACCURSED TEELA!
THE ANCIENT PROPHECY IS FULFILLED!
WAR BETWEEN GRAYSKULL'S BLOOD!
ONE WILL BRING DESTRUCTION! ONE WILL FIGHT IT BACK!
GRAAAAGHHH!
THAT PROPHECY HAS ALREADY BEEN AVERTED...
...BY ADAM!
NUGHHHHHH!
NO! IT HAS SIMPLY TAKEN A NEW FORM!
THE POWER OF DESTRUCTION CANNOT LAY IDLE!
THE DARK HEIR OF GRAYSKULL HAS SEIZED ITS MANTLE...

"--SKELETOR HAS THE POWER!
"EVEN NOW, HE TOILS IN THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL, ACCURSED TEELA...
"...FOR THE BLOOD OF HE-MAN NOW COURSES THROUGH SKELETOR'S VEINS. IT HAS GRANTED HIM ACCESS, AT LAST, TO THAT GREAT PLACE OF MAKING.
"AND OH, HE IS MAKING! HE IS FORGING A NEW WEAPON TO FINISH THIS WAR!
"HE HAS RENDERED DOWN HORDAK'S DARK BLADE IN THE FIRES OF THE FORGE...
"...AND HIS OWN HAVOC STAFF LIKEWISE! THEIR MAGICAL POWERS WILL BE COMBINED IN THE NEW WEAPON!
"EACH STRIKE OF HIS HAMMER SENDS SHOCKWAVES THROUGH THE CASTLE...THROUGH THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL...
"...AND OUT INTO THE COSMOS BEYOND!

"ACROSS SPACE AND TIME, WORLDS SHATTER AS THE SHOCKWAVES HIT THEM.
"AND THE LOST SOULS OF THOSE WORLDS FLOW BACK TO THE FORGE, AND INFUSE THE ALLOY OF SKELETOR'S NEW WEAPON.
YOUR MOTHER WAS ALWAYS SO WORRIED THAT SKELETOR MIGHT ONE DAY GAIN ACCESS TO THE FORGE!
GNNNAAGHH!
THE UNIVERSE IS ABOUT TO SEE SHE WAS RIGHT TO BE AFRAID!
NOOOOO!

Castle Grayskull.
FORWARD! BREAK DOWN THE SHIELD!
DEATH TO SKELETOR!
THE HEAVENS... THEY ARE DYING, LORD FISTO!
FIGHT ON! WE MUST TAKE THE CASTLE!
WHERE IS ADAM?
WHERE IS...THE KING?

I WANT TO BECOME A MASTER.
ETERNOS PALACE, TWELVE YEARS EARLIER...
ADAM... DEAR SON.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES THIS REALM SO SPECIAL?
ETERNIA IS HOME TO THE MAGIC THAT CREATED THE UNIVERSE.
IF OUR WORLD HERE WERE TO BE DESTROYED, THE VERY FABRIC OF REALITY WOULD UNRAVEL.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, ADAM?
AS ETERNIA FARES, SO FARES THE UNIVERSE.
HE WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND, BROTHER.
KELDOR?
YOU ARE WASTING YOUR TIME.
HE WILL NEVER LIVE UP TO THE MANTLE OF GRAYSKULL.

N-NO!
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK... CONFUSED.
THIS...THIS ISN'T RIGHT. THIS IS THE PAST...
...THIS ISN'T REALLY HAPPENING, IS IT?
WHERE AM I?
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, BOY?
IN A... MEMORY.
BUT DIFFERENT. NOT RIGHT. YOU'RE DIFFERENT, UNCLE KELDOR....
YOU'RE...
...HSSSS!
GAAAAGHH!

HSSSSS!
AGHHH!
STTISSSHHH
FASSSCINATING. YOU ARE SSSMARTER THAN I HAD REALIZED.
YOU'VE FIGURED IT OUT, HAVEN'T YOU, ADAM?
W-WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR VOICE?
UHNN! NO, I--
--STRATOS?!

LET ME GO!
UGGHHMSSSS!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
AM I... DEAD?
YOU SSSHOULD BE, BUT YOU ARE NOT... NOT YET.
YOU'RE INSSSIDE ME, HMMM... OR RATHER...
...I AM INSSSIDE YOU.

I AM INSSSIDE EVERY FERSSSON YOU HAVE EVER KNOWN...
...EVERY MEMORY YOU CHERISSSSSH...
...EVERY MOMENT THAT MAKESSS YOU WHO YOU ARE...
...I AM INSSSIDE YOUR MIND, ADAM!
AND THERE ISSSSS NO ESSSCAPE!
ETERNOS, NO!

YOU ARE MY LATESSST VICTIM!
I ENTERED YOU THE DAY YOU TOOK BACK ETERNOSSSS!
ASSS WE BATTLE HERE, INSSSIDE YOUR MIND, OUT IN THE REAL WORLD, I AM WEARING YOUR SSSSKIN!
NOT EVEN YOUR BELOVED SSSSORCHSSSS CAN TELL I AM INHABITING YOU...
...BECOMING MORE AND MORE YOU BY THE MOMENT!
GET OFF ME! GET BACK!

YOU WILL NOT OVERCOME ME!
I WILL LEARN YOUR INNER WORKINGSSS BETTER THAN YOU KNOW YOURSSSELF!
THAT ISSS WHAT MAKESSS ME UNDETECTABLE!
THAT'SSS WHAT MAKESSS ME MASSSTER OF DISSSGUISSSE!
WHLANNG
I WILL BECOME ASSSCENDANT, WHILE YOU SSSLOWLY LOSSSE YOUR SSSENSE OF SSSELF!
WHAAAKK!
UGHNNK!
YOU WILL BE DEAD...
...AND I WILL BECOME YOU FOREVER MORE!

KRRKTHNNGHHH
NEVER!

AGRAHHH!
YOU ARE INDEED SSSTRONG!
SSSTRONGER THAN ANY VICTIM I HAVE CONSSSUMED!
YOUR MISSSTAKE WAS TO SSSACRIFICE YOUR POWERSSS AT MOUNT ZOAR!
SSSO LONG ASSS YOU WIELDED THE SSSWORD OF POWER, YOU KEPT ME AT BAY!
JUSSST ASSSS KING GRAYSSSKULL DID LONG AGO!
BY DESSTROYING THE SSSWORD, YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN!
YOU GAVE ME A GLORIOUSSSS AND UNANTICIPATED CHANCE TO CLAIM YOU!
YOU ARE MSSSS!
NO! NOOO!

PRINCE DUM DUM ISN'T FINISHED YET!
HE'S FULL OF SURPRISES!
COME ON, GOLDILOCKS!
BATTLE CAT!
AND... TEELA?
NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS! LET'S RIDE!
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
SOMEWHERE SAFE.
ACTUALLY, YOU TELL US. WE'RE INSIDE YOUR HEAD. YOU'RE THE ONE DRIVING HERE.
I'VE NEVER BEEN HERE BEFORE, BUT IT FEELS FAMILIAR...
...IT'S THE CAVE WHERE KING GRAYSKULL WAS BORN, ISN'T IT?
YUP!

THIS IS AN ANCESTOR MEMORY, PULLED FROM THE DEEPEST PARTS OF YOU, THE PARTS HSSSS HAS NOT YET REACHED.
YOUR AX AND SHIELD? THOSE ARE GRAYSKULL'S WEAPONS.
HE USED THEM BEFORE HE FORGED THE SWORD OF POWER. THEY ARE OLD AND LOST.
BET THEY HURT HSSSS LIKE HELL.
ANOTHER TEELA?
AH, YOU'RE HERE. GOOD.
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
WE'RE HIDDEN FROM HSSSS, BUT IT WON'T BE LONG UNTIL HE FINDS US.
SOON HSSSS WILL HAVE SUBSUMED EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE YOU HOLD DEAR.
WE THREE ARE THE ONLY ONES LEFT.
HOW HAVE YOU SURVIVED SO LONG?
CAUSE YOU'RE CRAZY IN LOVE WITH US, DUM DUM!
ALWAYS HAVE BEEN!! YOU JUST CAN'T LET US GO!
OW!
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME?
OH BARF!
:SNNNRRRK!:

HOW DID YOU PUT UP WITH ME WHEN I WAS LIKE THEM?
IT WASN'T EASY.
BEHOLD. THERE IS A REASON WHY HSSSS IS HAVING DIFFICULTY POSSESSING YOU ENTIRELY.
THERE ARE KEY MOMENTS IN YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU DISPLAYED THE VIRTUES THAT MADE YOU WORTHY OF HE-MAN'S POWER.
THIS SWORD BANISHED YOU ONCE, IT WILL DO SO AGAIN! BY MY WORD, IT WILL DO SO AGAIN.
CLANG
COURAGE...
I HAVE THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, AND THAT POWER WAS GIVEN TO ME BY ZOAR.
...WISDOM...
YAAARGHHH!
YOUR ISLAND IS SAVED. AND YOUR CURSE IS LIFTED.
ANWAT-GAR AND YOUR PEOPLE ARE PARIAH NO MORE.
...KINDNESS...
...AND STRENGTH.
THESE ARE THE PARTS OF YOU THAT ARE HARDER FOR HSSSS TO SUBSUME.

HARDER, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
HSSSS HAS MANAGED TO CLAIM THEM ALL EXCEPT ONE.
A KEYSTONE MOMENT IN YOUR LIFE THAT HE IS SEARCHING FOR BUT MUST NEVER FIND.
THEN HE WILL NEVER FIND IT.
I HAVE SEARCHED FOR IT, AND I HAVE RECOVERED IT.
HERE. YOU MUST PROTECT THIS MEMORY AT ALL COSTS, ADAM.
IT MUST NOT FALL...

...TO ASSIST!
NO!
I HAVE FOUND YOU!
NOW YOU WILL FULLY DIE!
I WILL BECOME YOU! I WILL SSSLAY ALL MY ENEMIES!
I WILL CLAIM THE FORGE OF GRAYSKULL AND RULE ETERNIA AGAIN!

DIE! DIE!
WHY WON'T YOU DIE!?
WHY WON'T YOU DIE!?
DIE!
KTSSSS

THE END OF ALL WORLDS

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Tom Derenick Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Szymon Kudranski**

GODS OF ETERNIA!
SWIFTWIND, WE WILL NEVER REACH THE CASTLE!
THE CURSED DARK RIDERS DENY US AT EVERY TURN!
BUT WHEN I STRIKE BACK, THEY ARE LIKE PHANTOMS!
MY SWORD TOUCHES NOTHING!
=NHHH!=
THEIR WEAPONS ARE SOLID! SOLID ENOUGH TO SLAY ME!

BUT WE MUST GET THROUGH!
TIME IS RUNNING OUT! THE WORLDS OF THE COSMOS ARE EXPLODING, ONE BY ONE!
AGGHHHH!
I'VE N-NO CHOICE--
--THE FORCES OF DARKNESS HAVE BESET AND CONTROLLED ME ENOUGH!
I WILL PROTECT MYSELF AND THE LIGHT OF THE UNIVERSE!
AND THE WORDS COME TO HER, AS IF FROM AN ANCIENT MEMORY...
SWORD...
...TO SHIELD!
EEEEEEE!
EEEEIIIGGHHH!

ONWARDS!

CASTLE GRAYSKULL, FAR BELOW.
THE SNAKE LEGIONS CONTINUE TO ASSAULT THE WALLS...
...BUT THEIR SOUND AND FURY WILL AMOUNT TO NOTHING.
THE SHIELD WILL HOLD.
BIP BIP
WHAT IS THAT...THAT BEEPING NOISE?
TRI-KLOPS? IT'S COMING FROM YOUR VISOR...
BIP BIP
WHAT? WHAT THE BLAZES COULD--
...NO! MAN AT ARMS! WHEN HE STUDIED MY ARMOR...
KLEK
...HE PLANTED A BOMB! A BOMB!
HELP ME! HELP ME GET THIS OFF BEFORE--
BIP BIP
BIP BIP BIP

AGGGHHH!
=NUHHGG!=
KRRAKOOOOOOOOM!!!
FKOOOOOOM
THE SHIELD IS DOWN!
IT IS DOWN!
TAKE THE CASTLE! STORM IT AND TAKE IT!

BOOM.
YOU FOUND MY GIFT THEN, TRI-KLOPS.
REST IN PIECES.
=UGHNN...=
CLARITY RETURNS.
FOR THAT, I AM GRATEFUL. THE FOUL CONTROL OF THE SLIME PIT HAD ME IN ITS GRIP TOO LONG AND--
--ADAM?
MY PRINCE?
YOU'RE DEAD, CURSE YOU!
WHY WON'T YOU DIE?
WHY WON'T YOU DIE?
ADAM! SPEAK TO ME!
WHERE ARE YOU? TELL ME...
"...WHERE IN YOUR ERMENTED MIND ARE YOU?"
TWELVE YEARS AWAY, IN THE DEPTHS OF MEMORY.
A CRASH SITE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF ZARCANE.

A CHILD DESPERATE TO SAVE HIS FATHER.
I WON'T LEAVE YOU, FATHER! I WILL SAVE YOU!
HSSSS IS C-COMING. ADAM, HE'S C-COMING...
FATHER?
D-DO YOU YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS, MY BOY?
DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU REALLY ARE?
THIS...THIS IS THE MOMENT THAT TEELA WAS TALKING ABOUT, ISN'T IT?
YES...
YES, YOUR LAST KEYSTONE MOMENT. YOU MUST KEEP IT SAFE, ADAM.
...HSSSS IS COMING FOR IT.
I C-CAN'T FIGHT THAT!
YOU CAN. YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH. YOU ALWAYS HAVE...

...IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO BELIEVE THAT.
HSSSSS
STOP!
ARGH! WHAT ISSS THISSS?
I CANNOT MOVE!
HOW?
I...I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU, MONSTER. NOT ANYMORE.
ADAM? WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WAIT--
I...I'M TAKING IT B-BACK, HSSSS!
I'M T-TAKING BACK...

...CONTROL!
=NHHHGGK!=
ADAM!
OH, ADAM!
YOU HAVE...SSSLAIN ME, HUMAN...
...BUT IN DEATH, I WILL SSSTEAL YOUR VICTORY...

...BEFORE I WORE YOUR SKULL, I WAS AN THE DOCTOR MORPOR...
...AND I HAD AMPLE TIME AND OPPORTUNITY...
...TO SPREAD MY VENOM IN THE BLOOD OF ALL MY ENEMIES.
WITH MY LARGEST BREATH, I TAKE THEM WITH ME...
"...SSSSSSSSSSSSSS~"

THE SNAKE MEN! WHAT IN THE NAME OF GRAYSKULL IS HAPPENING TO THE SNAKE MEN?
ADAM?
F-FATHER?
TWELVE YEARS AGO, AT THIS VERY SPOT, YOU SHOWED ME THAT YOU COULD BE A MASTER, SON.
YOU TAPPED THE POWER OF ETERNITY AND HELD TIME STILL LONG ENOUGH TO SAVE MY LIFE.
NOW IT IS THE UNIVERSE THAT NEEDS SAVING.

OUR ARMY...BURNED AWAY AND GONE!
WE CANNOT TAKE THE CASTLE NOW! WE CANNOT WIN THE WAR!
WE--
HAHA HAHA HA HA HA HA
SKELETOR! THAT'S SKELETOR'S VOICE!
EVERY SPECIES ACROSS SPACE-TIME SHARES A SIMILAR BELIEF AS TO HOW THE UNIVERSE BEGAN.
CHAOS GIVING WAY TO ORDER. DARKNESS BECOMING LIGHT.
DIFFERENT NAMES, BUT THEY ALL SPEAK OF THE SAME THING...

...THE SOURCE OF CREATION! THE GODDESS HERSELF!
THE STAR SEED!
NO...
TONIGHT, I WILL MURDER LIFE ITSELF!
YOU CANNOT STOP ME! YOUR ARMIES ARE GONE...
...HE-MAN IS BROKEN...
...AND SHE-RA!

...YOUR LAST HOPE...
...HAS FOUGHT TOO HARD...
...AND EXHAUSTED ALL HER STRENGTH...
SHAKOOOOM
...WHILE I... I AM THE POWER!

I AM DEATH INCARNATE!

ANYONE CAN DESTROY A UNIVERSE.
ONLY I CAN RULE WHAT COMES AFTER!
THIS IS HOW IT BEGINS AND HOW IT SHALL END! CHAOS RETURNS! DARKNESS REIGNS AGAIN!
CAN YOU DO THIS, MY SON?
CAN YOU HOLD ONTO TIME AS YOU DID BEFORE?
CAN YOU STOP THIS MOMENT?
BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, THIS IS THE EN!!

YES.
YES, FATHER, I CAN.
TIME HALTS. THERE IS SILENCE.
ADAM HAS BUT ONE SECOND OF LIFE LEFT IN HIM.
HE STRETCHES IT INTO AN ETERNITY.

THE TWIN POWERS OF ZOAR AND SERPOS FLOOD THROUGH HIM.
THEY BURN HIM AWAY UNTIL ALL HE HAS LEFT IS HIS DETERMINATION TO SAVE THE PEOPLE AND THE UNIVERSE HE LOVES.
HIS HUMANITY. THE ONLY STRENGTH HE REALLY NEEDS.
YOUR SHEER WILL HAS BROUGHT YOU TO THE FORGE, MY BOY.
DISPEL THE FLAMES OF HOROKOTH...
...YOU ARE THE MASTER OF ETERNITY.

WHOOOOMMGH
ENGHHH!
WHAT? WHAT HAS HAPPENED? I--
NO WEAPONS

THE *UNIVERSE* IS WATCHING, SKELETOR.
LET'S **FINISH** THIS.

DEATH ETERNAL

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Szymon Kudranski**

I WILL OVERCOME YOU, EVIL-LYN! I WILL-- UGHNNNN!
PAIN! TERRIBLE PAIN! MY CHILDREN ARE SUFFERING!
AGGHHNN!
I CANNOT STAY HERE!
I MUST GO TO THEM!
HAH! TELEPORTING AWAY WON'T SAVE YOU...
"...GRAYSKULL IS FALLING, AND YOUR SNAKE MEN ARE DYING!"
NO! NOOO!
SO MUCH PAIN... SUFFERING...

...OVERWHELMING...
FEELING WEAK, TEELA? YOU ARE LINKED TO THE SNAKE PEOPLE. THEIR DEVOTION EMPOWERS YOU.
THEY ARE DYING AND YOU ARE DIMINISHED.
BUT EACH NEW DEATH IN THE UNIVERSE MAKES ME STRONGER!
ZOAR...AND SERPOS...ARE TRULY AT AN END!
FINISHED!
N-NO, EVIL-LYN...THERE'S HOPE. ADAM HAS CARRIED THE POWER OF THE AGES BACK TO THE FORGE AND DISPELLED THE DARKNESS.
I CAN FEEL IT...
KRAKK
HE'S DONE IT. AND NOW HE'S BACK. DO YOU HEAR ME HOROKOTH?
"...HE-MAN IS BACK!"
I KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE PLANNED, SKELETOR.
I WILL NOT ALLOW MY OWN UNCLE TO DESTROY ALL LIFE.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU SURVIVED, ADAM, OR WHY THE POWER HAS RETURNED TO YOU...
BUT I DO NOT CARE. YOU HAVE SIMPLY DELAYED THE INEVITABLE.
HERE HE COMES...
...HAVE A TASTE OF THE UNIVERSE TO COME!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
FORCES OF ETERNIA! STAND WITH ME!
GET TO HE-MAN'S SIDE! WE MUST HOLD BACK THIS ONSLAUGHT!

FOR ETERNIA!
"YOU CANNOT WIN, HE-MAN...

I NOW HAVE THE MEANS TO CAPTURE, SUMMON AND COMMAND THE DEAD FROM ACROSS ALL OF TIME AND SPACE!
"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO FACE OLD FRIENDS AND OLD FOES THAT ARE UNKILLABLE?
"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO FACE AN UNENDING TIDE OF DESTRUCTION?
I HAVE FORGED MYSELF THE ULTIMATE POWER-WEAPON OF DEATH, AND FUSED IT TO MY VERY BODY!
EVERY DEATH IN THE UNIVERSE NOW FEEDS ME AND INHABITS ME.
I AM THE MULTITUDE! DEATH INCARNATE!
AND WHEN I SLAY THE GODDESS, HER DEATH WILL FEED ME, TOO, AND I WILL BECOME MORE.
I WILL BECOME THE ANTI-VERSE.
DEATH ETERNAL!

TREMBLE, HE-MAN, AS YOUR PREDECESSORS--
--AND YOUR BETTERS--
--TEAR YOU APART!
NO!
VYKRON? HE-RO?
SIR LASER LOT?
WUN-DAR?
DEATH IS THE ONLY LEGACY OF LIFE. SOON, EVEN THE GODDESS MUST YIELD TO IT.
IT IS DESTINY. SHE CANNOT ESCAPE IT ANY MORE THAN YOU CAN.
SHALL I END YOUR AGONY NOW?
ZOAR...M-MOTHER...

"...C-CAN YOU HEAR ME...?
"...M-MOTHER... HEED ME... HELP ME...
"...HELP ME..."
WHAAA--
NOOOOOOOOOO!

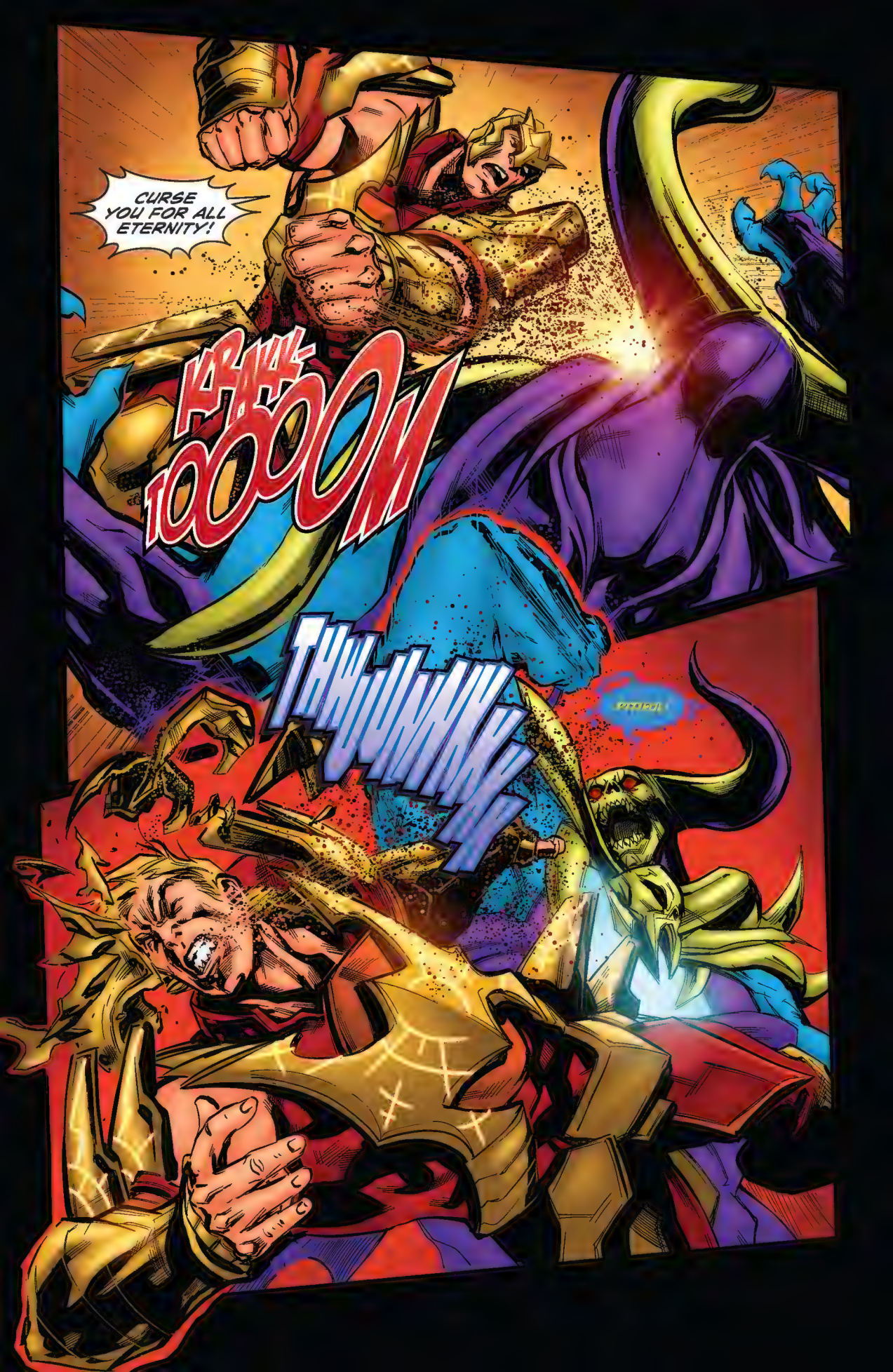
S-SOME BONDS ARE ETERNAL...
...S-SHE-RA... SHE-RA, WAKE UP...
...ARE NEEDED...
...UHHN... WHAT IS...
THIS DUST, IT...
...I MUST JOIN THE FIGHT. I MUST GET UP AND JOIN THE FIGHT...

...I KNOW WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO. WHAT I WAS BORN TO DO.
I MUST DESTROY THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL.
HELLO, DAUGHTER.
H-HORDAK?
WE ARE TOGETHER IN DEATH.
=UGHHNNKK!=
BUT I AM MORE THAN DEATH. I AM REBORN IN THE GLORY OF SKELETOR!

CAN YOU TRULY FIGHT THEM ALL, HE-MAN?
ALL THOSE BRAVE LOST SOULS?
HOW MANY WARRIORS HAVE RISEN UP OVER THE YEARS, AS MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE, TO PROTECT GRAYSKULL?
WHAT MAKES YOU THE SPECIAL ONE, EH?
NOTHING.
LOOK AT KING GRAYSKULL NOW.
AKKHHGG!
BOTH OF YOU, SELF-RIGHTEOUS FOOLS.
NEITHER OF YOU WORTHY OF ME!

OH, TEELA...
YOU CAN'T DIE, MY BABY GIRL.
US OLD-TIMERS HAVE MADE A REAL MESS OF THE WORLD, HAVEN'T WE?
YOU CHILDREN HAVE DONE ENOUGH TO PAY FOR THE SINS OF YOUR FATHERS...
...AND MOTHERS.
IF THE UNIVERSE SURVIVES THIS NIGHT, THE NEXT WORLD BELONGS TO YOU.
I'M A MAN OF SCIENCE, NOT MAGIC, BUT I'VE PICKED UP A TRICK OR TWO ALONG THE WAY...
I'VE BEEN PREPARED TO TRADE MY LIFE FOR YOURS SINCE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN.
LIVE, TEELA...
"...LIVE!"

UGHNNK!
YOU WEAR THE SIGIL OF GRAYSKULL, BUT YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ME!
YOU'RE THE SAME, FRIGHTENED LITTLE GIRL I ABDUCTED.
I TRIED TO MOLD YOU, AND MAKE YOU PURE, BUT YOU RESISTED!
GAAHH!
THAT'S WHY I BESTED YOU ON THE SANDS OF TIME. NOT BECAUSE I WAS MORE POWERFUL, BUT BECAUSE I WAS PURE.
WHILE YOU ARE THIS "SHE-RA," YOU ARE SPLIT BETWEEN ADORA AND DESPARA...
...CHOOSE BETWEEN THEM. CHOOSE DESPARA.
ONLY DESPARA IS STRONG ENOUGH TO FACE ME.
ONLY DESPARA HAS THE RUTHLESSNESS TO FINISH ME!
AGHHH!
CURSE YOU, SKELETOR!
CURSE YOU FOR TURNING THE SOUL OF GRAYSKULL INTO YOUR PUPPET!
ENOUGH OF THIS!


CURSE YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY!
KRAK TOOOOM
THWUNNNK

YOU WILL NOT TRIUMPH HERE!
I ALREADY HAVE!
THE FIRES OF ETERNITY RAGE UNCONTROLLABLY! THE EYES OF GRAYSKULL REMAIN INTACT!
KRAKOOM!
SHAKOOM!

OUR BATTLE IS TEARING ETERNIA APART!
BY CHOOSING TO FIGHT ME, YOU HAVE ONLY USHERED IN THE END!
YOU'RE INSANE!
YOU'RE MORTAL! YOU'LL DESTROY YOURSELF ALONG WITH EVERYTHING ELSE!
WILL I?
LET'S FIND OUT!
BARGHHHH!

I HAVE LIVED IN DARKNESS ALL MY LIFE!
BUT AT THE END OF DARKNESS, THERE IS THE LIGHT OF HOPE!
ALL THE VICTIMS YOU HAVE KILLED, OR I HAVE KILLED FOR YOU--
--I WILL NOT REST UNTIL THOSE SOULS SEE THE LIGHT AS WELL!
UGHHHKK!
SHKOOO OOM
EVERY SOUL.
EXCEPT YOURS.

WHO'S NEXT?
DO YOUR WORST!
UGHKK!?
HAS YOUR SISTER TOLD YOU THE TALE? THAT SKELETOR WILL ALWAYS LOSE BECAUSE THERE'S ALWAYS A HE-MAN TO DEFEAT HIM?
NO MORE!
I WILL DEFY FATE ITSELF! I HAVE ONE LAST REBELLION LEFT IN ME!
I WILL DEFEAT YOU EVEN IF IT MEANS DESTROYING LIFE!
DO YOU HEAR ME? I WILL MURDER THIS ALL!
NYYGHHHH!
NO, SKELETOR... THE FALLEN ARE NOT YOURS TO ENSLAVE...

...THEY ARE MINE TO SAVE!
I AM HE-MAN... I AM...
...THE MASTER OF ETERNITY!
TOGETHER WITH EVERY LAST SOUL IN THE UNIVERSE, I DEFY YOU!
I WILL PUSH BACK THE DARKNESS!
BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...
FOR THE HONOR OF GRAYSKULL...

...WE HAVE THE POWER!

N-NOOOOOOO
FTOOMMM
WE HAVE THE POWER!
WE HAVE THE POWER!
SHKOOOOOM

WE HAVE THE POWER!
ALL THAT ENERGY...PUT TO GOOD USE.
FOR CREATION, NOT DESTRUCTION.
THE FIRES OF ETERNITY ARE SAFE ONCE MORE.
CASTLE GRAYSKULL RISES AGAIN!

REST EASY, BROTHER! YOU DID IT! SKELETOR IS GONE!
I TAKE NO PLEASURE IN THAT, ADORA.
I WAS HIS ENEMY, BUT HE WAS NEVER MINE.
UHMM...
...ANYONE KNOW A GOOD SEAMSTRESS?
KINDA EXPOSED HERE.
TEELA!
I THINK THE WAR IS OVER, DON'T YOU?
...SO, I HAVE A QUESTION.
WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

FACING THE FUTURE

Rob David Story

Dan Abnett Script

Pop Mhan Artist

Mark Roberts Colorist

Deron Bennett Letterer

Cover Art by **Szymon Kudranski**

I DREAMT LAST NIGHT I WAS SOMEONE *ELSE.*
SOMEONE BRAVE. SOMEONE MIGHTY. A *HERO.*
BUT IT WASN'T THE *PAST* I SAW...

...IT WAS THE *FUTURE.*

I DREAMT THAT AFTER A ***GREAT WAR,*** I WOULD LEAD MY FRIENDS, AND THEY WOULD FIGHT BESIDE ME, EACH WIELDING A POWER ***GREATER*** THAN THEY HAD KNOWN BEFORE...

...GUARDIANS, KNIGHTS, WARRIORS OF A RENEWED ETERNIA...

...MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE ***REBORN.***

MNH...

IT WAS A GOOD DREAM, BUT IT WAS ***JUST*** A DREAM.

MY IMAGINATION. A FANCY. NOTHING MORE.

AWAKING, I REMEMBER WHO I ***REALLY*** AM.

ADAM OF ETERNIA.

KING OF AN EMPTY KINGDOM.
THE FUTURE HAS NEVER SEEMED SO UNCERTAIN.
AND FOR THAT, WE OWE YOU OUR THANKS.

GRRRR
EASY, CAT.
ZODAC IS A FRIEND.
AT LEAST... I THINK HE IS.
I'M NEITHER FRIEND NOR FOE, JUST A SERVANT OF THE STARS.
I SEE THE PAST AND THE FUTURE, AND THAT PRIVILEGE ALLOWS ME TO ADVISE.
SO REVEAL MY FORTUNE, THEN.
I KNOW THE PAST. YESTERDAY I DEFEATED SKELETOR IN FINAL BATTLE.
NOW, I HAVE NO... PERSPECTIVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE WAR MEANS FOR THE FUTURE.
IT MEANS THE UNIVERSE IS NO LONGER GOING TO END.
SKELETOR WAS TRYING TO MURDER LIFE. YOU WERE TRYING TO STOP DEATH.
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE DEATH, BUT THANKS TO YOU, LIFE SURVIVES TO BALANCE IT.
FOREVERMORE.
YOU HAVE CHANGED DESTINY.
THE FUTURE IS NO LONGER IN THE STARS. IT IS IN THE HANDS OF LIVING THINGS, AND WILL BE WROUGHT, DAY BY DAY, BY THEIR CHOICES.
YOU HAVE FREED EVERYONE TO MAKE THEIR OWN LIVES.
INCLUDING ME. THE FUTURE HAS NO NEED OF ME AS ITS WITNESS. THERE IS NOTHING PERMANENT LEFT TO BE READ.
WAIT! DON'T GO!
WHAT IS MY PURPOSE NOW?
LOOK TO CASTLE GRAYSKULL. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN MORE THAN JUST POWER...

"...FOR SKELETOR, IT REPRESENTED LEGITIMACY. FOR SHE-RA, IT IS ABOUT REDEMPTION.
"YOU MUST DECIDE WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU."
MONTHS LATER...
MORE REFUGEES ARRIVE EVERY DAY, MY LORD. SURVIVORS FROM THE WAR, AND THE TRIALS OF HORDAK'S OCCUPATION.
GRAYSKULL IS OPEN TO ALL, STRATOS.
WHAT PROPORTION OF THE SURVIVING POPULATION HAS MADE IT HERE?
HARD TO KNOW, BUT WE HAVE SPREAD THE INVITATION AND PROVIDED ALL THE TRANSPORT WE CAN, AS PER YOUR ORDERS.
THE CASTLE SHOULD PROTECT THEM, AND FOOD FROM THE FORESTS THAT MOSS MAN GAVE HIS LIFE TO CREATE WILL LAST FOR GENERATIONS.

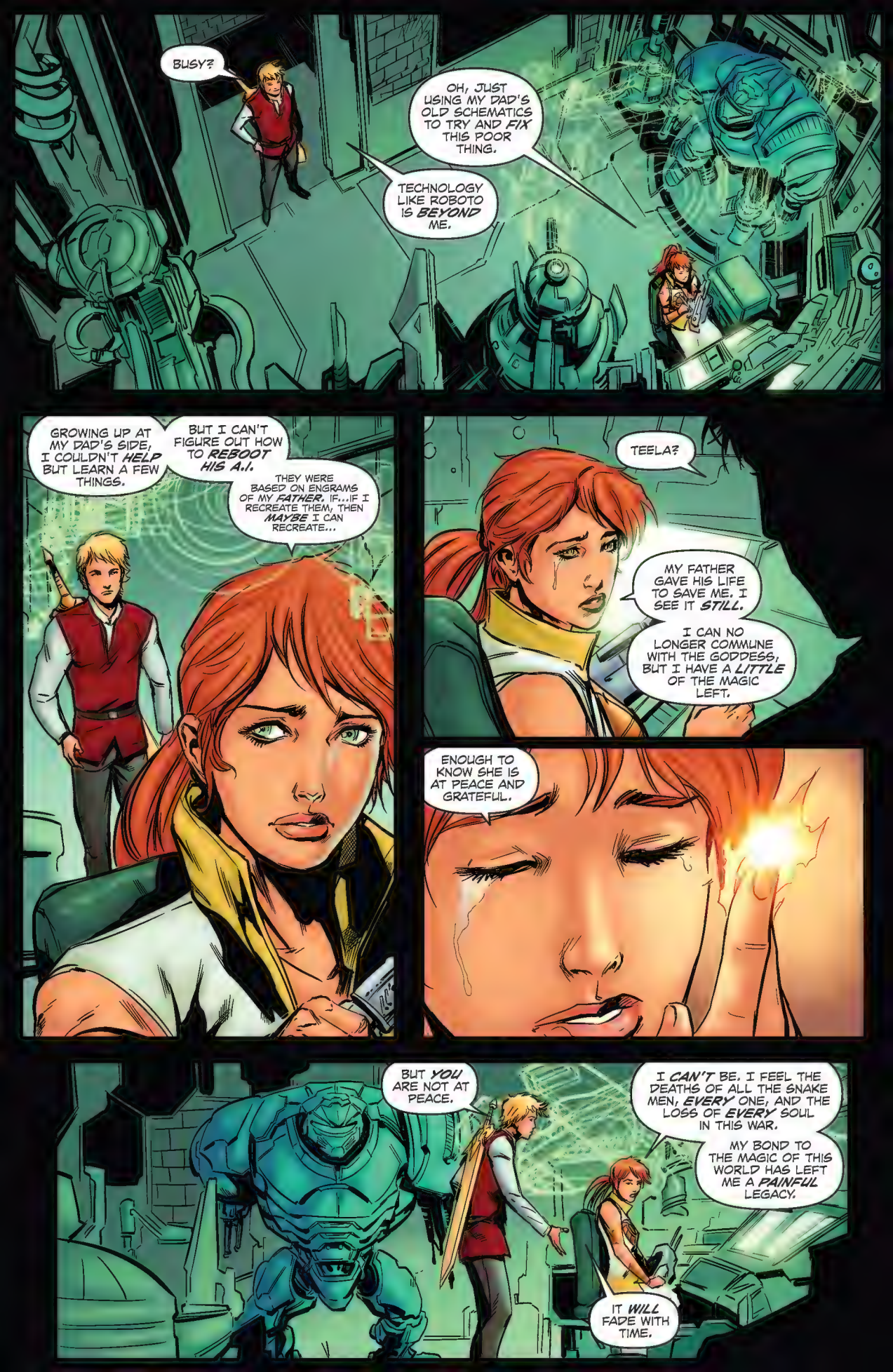
"SO, CHILDREN...
WE MUST THRIVE, AND TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE FUTURE OF ETERNIA...
WE MUST DO MORE THAN SURVIVE, OLD FRIEND.
HERE, THEY CAN SURVIVE, MY LORD.
YOUR NEW HOME, CASTLE GRAYSKULL, IS THE VERY HEART OF IT, WHERE THE FIRES OF ETERNITY BURN.
ALL THE PRIMAL POWERS OF THE UNIVERSE FLOW THROUGH OUR WORLD, WHICH ACTS AS A NEXUS TO BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER.
...ETERNIA IS THE FIRST PLANET OF CREATION, AND THE MOTHER OF ALL THAT CAME AFTER.
TEELA, IS THAT WHERE HE-MAN MADE HIS SWORD?
IT'S SHE-RA!
THE SWORDS ARE HOW WE SUMMON THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL.
YES. AND WHERE MY SWORD WAS FORGED, AS WELL.

WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO HAVE THE POWER?
IT IS... KNOWING THAT YOU ARE DOING THE THING YOU WERE BORN TO DO.
THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY, CHILDREN.
TEACHING YOUNG MINDS IS A NOBLE PROFESSION, TEELA. THIS MUST GIVE YOU JOY.
SOME. BUT SINCE THE WAR, JOY IS A SCARCE COMMODITY.
I KNOW. YOUR LOSS WAS GREAT.
NO GREATER THAN YOURS.
NOT TRUE.
I GAINED YOU, AND ADAM.
I GAINED EVERYTHING.
AH! THE SCARS OF THE FRIGHT ZONES BLIGHT THE PLANET.
SOIL IS STERILE, CITIES DECIMATED...
HOW CAN WE MAKE THE PLANET LIVE, MY LORD?

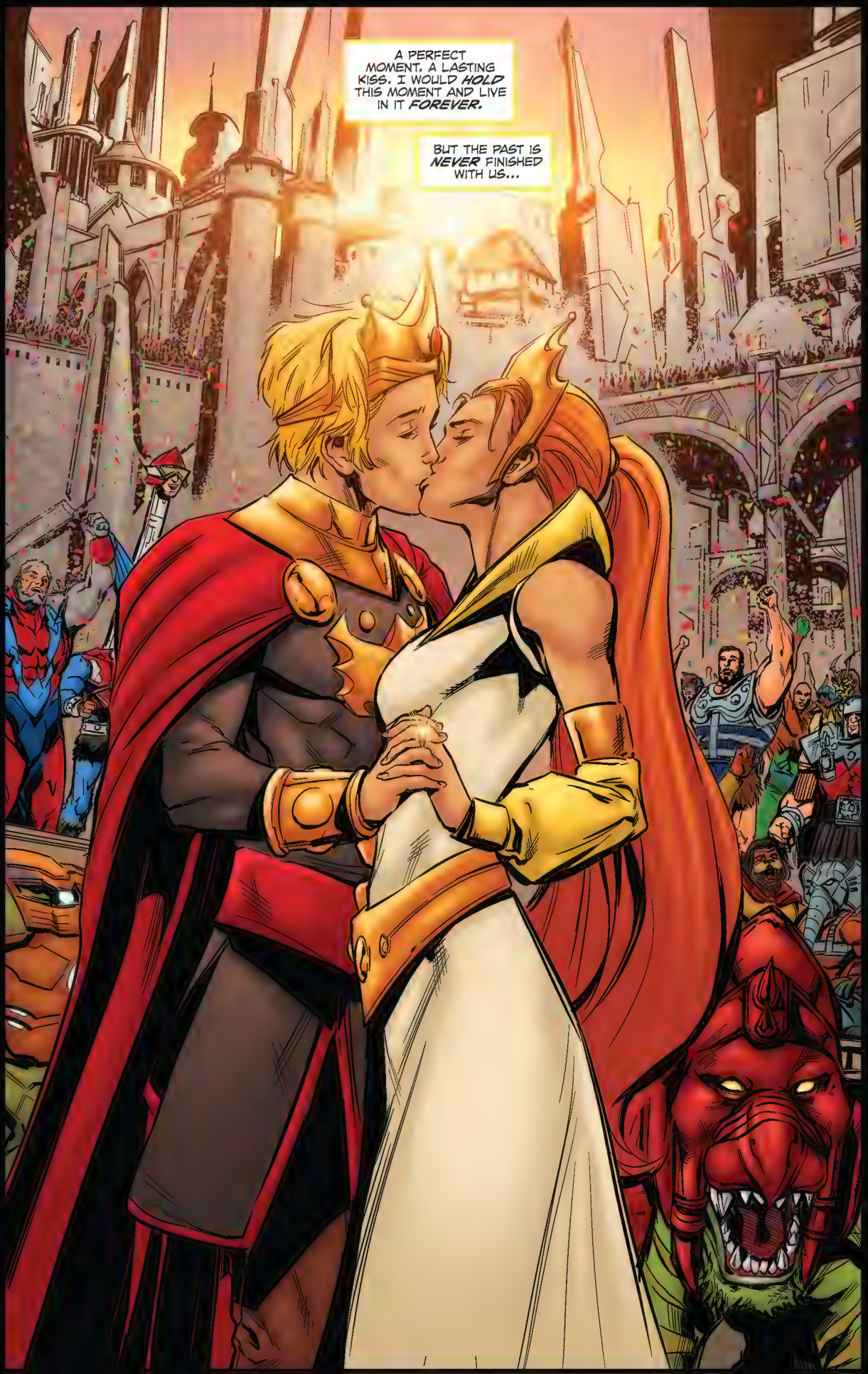
SEE THERE? THE CENTRAL POINT IS THIS CASTLE.
NOW IMAGINE A NETWORK OF PYLONS...
...LINKING EVERY MOUNTAIN, CITY AND FIELD.
ONCE ACTIVATED, IT WILL DRAW POWER FROM THE CASTLE TO ALL PARTS OF THE LAND.
IT WILL SUPPLY HOMES AND TOWNS AND ALLOW US TO REBUILD.
THIS CHAMBER WILL BE THE NEXUS.
BUT... IF THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL IS SCATTERED, HOW CAN WE PROTECT IT?
WE PROTECT IT BY SHARING IT.
KING GRAYSKULL HAD THE BEST INTENTIONS WHEN HE SEALED THE POWER AWAY.
BUT THE WAR SHOWED US THAT POWER PLACED IN THE SOLE CARE OF ANY MAN, EVEN ME, MAY NOT BE BEST FOR ALL.
WE ALL RESONATE WITH THE PRIMAL POWERS, EACH IN OUR OWN WAY.
SOME PEOPLE RESONATE SO STRONGLY, THEY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BECOME MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.
HOW WILL WE FIND THESE...THESE... MASTERS?

I THINK THEY WILL FIND *US*, STRATOS.
AFFINITY TO THE POWERS BECOMES EVIDENT AT *PIVOTAL* MOMENTS IN LIFE.
IN THE WINNING OF A RACE, OR THE SPARING OF A FOE IN BATTLE, OR EVEN IN A *DREAM*.
ONCE THE GIFT IS *REVEALED*, IT WILL BRING THEM TO THE FORGE, AND I WILL BE THERE TO *WELCOME* THEM.
ADAM?
MAY I SPEAK WITH YOU... ALONE?
A *BOLD* VISION.
I'LL NEED *YOUR* HELP TO SEE IT THROUGH. RULING SIDE BY SIDE, WE--
I CANNOT STAY.
WHAT?
HORDAK IS DEAD, AND ETHERIA IS *FREED* FROM HIS GRIP.
I *MUST* RETURN THERE, AND TAKE CARE OF THE PEOPLE...BOTH THE LIVING *AND* THE DEAD.
YOU SAVED THE DEAD FROM SKELETOR AND RETURNED THEIR SOULS TO THE PEACE OF THE UNIVERSE.
BUT THE SOULS OF *DESPARA'S VICTIMS* ARE STILL IN PAIN.
I HAVE DREAMED OF A *CRYSTAL CASTLE* ON ETHERIA. *THAT* IS MY CALLING... TO BRING THE SOULS OF MY VICTIMS TO THE CASTLE'S LIGHT OF *HOPE*.
HOW WILL YOU FIND IT?
THE SORCERESS GAVE ME ONE LAST GIFT. AN ARTIFACT OF GRAYSKULL BURIED FOR A *THOUSAND* YEARS BENEATH THE GROUND AT SARNSCEPTER.
TEELA SAYS IT WILL LEAD ME TO THE CASTLE.
LET ME GO *WITH* YOU--
YOUR PLACE IS *HERE*. WITH YOUR PEOPLE, AND WITH *TEELA*. GO TO *HER*.
I *WILL* RETURN, BROTHER. THIS IS ONLY A GOODBYE... FOR *NOW*.
ON ETERNIA, WE DON'T *SAY* GOODBYE. WE SAY...

"...GOOD JOURNEY."


BUSY?
OH, JUST USING MY DAD'S OLD SCHEMATICS TO TRY AND FIX THIS POOR THING.
TECHNOLOGY LIKE ROBOTO IS BEYOND ME.
GROWING UP AT MY DAD'S SIDE, I COULDN'T HELP BUT LEARN A FEW THINGS.
BUT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW TO REBOOT HIS A.I.
THEY WERE BASED ON ENGRAMS OF MY FATHER. IF...IF I RECREATE THEM, THEN MAYBE I CAN RECREATE...
TEELA?
MY FATHER GAVE HIS LIFE TO SAVE ME. I SEE IT STILL.
I CAN NO LONGER COMMUNE WITH THE GODDESS, BUT I HAVE A LITTLE OF THE MAGIC LEFT.
ENOUGH TO KNOW SHE IS AT PEACE AND GRATEFUL.
BUT YOU ARE NOT AT PEACE.
I CAN'T BE. I FEEL THE DEATHS OF ALL THE SNAKE MEN, EVERY ONE, AND THE LOSS OF EVERY SOUL IN THIS WAR.
MY BOND TO THE MAGIC OF THIS WORLD HAS LEFT ME A PAINFUL LEGACY.
IT WILL FADE WITH TIME.

I DON'T *WANT* IT TO! I DON'T *WANT* TO RELEASE THIS PAIN! I WANT TO DO SOMETHING *WITH* IT!
WHAT AM I *SUPPOSED TO DO?*
YOUR WHOLE LIFE, YOU'VE TRIED TO LIVE UP TO THINGS.
YOUR FATHER'S IDEALS, YOUR MOTHER'S...AS CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, AND THEN SORCERESS.
NOW *YOU* GET TO CHOOSE WHO YOU SHOULD BE.
IT'S *YOUR* FUTURE.
I JUST HOPE I CAN BE *PART* OF IT.
THIS CASTLE WILL BE THE CENTER OF OUR NEW WORLD, BUT IT NEEDS YOU TO MAKE IT *ALIVE.*
IT NEEDS YOU TO BE ITS *HEART.*
WHOOO...NO *PRESSURE*, THEN.


A PERFECT MOMENT. A LASTING KISS. I WOULD HOLD THIS MOMENT AND LIVE IN IT FOREVER.
BUT THE PAST IS NEVER FINISHED WITH US...

THE ISLE OF ANWAT GAR.
"...PITILESS TRIALS I HAVE UNDERTAKEN...
THE CAVE OF SARYN THE WITCH.
...BEARING THESE REMAINS FROM THE FIELD OF WAR, TO THIS, THE LAIR OF HIS MOTHER...
...AND THE EVERLASTING POOL OF HER BLOOD, THERE TO BATHE THEM IN ITS POWER.
THE LONG RITUALS ARE NOW COMPLETE. FROM THE BLOOD...

...MAY HE BE HEALED AND REBORN!
OH... GLORIOUS.
...AND THE FUTURE IS FULL OF SURPRISES.

BUT WE WILL STAND AS DEFENDERS OF ALL LIFE.
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG

K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
FOR WE ARE THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE.

ALL OF US.
K-TANG
K-TANG
K-TANG
NOT BAD.
AH, THERE YOU ARE...WELCOME. WELCOME.
I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
ARE YOU READY?

YOU HAVE THE POWER.
NEVER THE END

HE-MAN

THUNDERCATS™

FREDDIE E. WILLIAMS II

SWORDS & OMENS

ARE
GRRR!!

YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW IT TO LOOK AT HIM HERE...

...FACING IGNOMINIOUS DEFEAT AT THE HAND...

...OR SHOULD I SAY BLADE.

OF HIS MOST HATED ENEMY...

...BUT THIS SHAMBLING, BANDAGE-ENCASED WRETCH...

...IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS IN ALL CREATION.

FOR HERE, ON THIRD EARTH, WITHIN HIS BLACK PYRAMID

GGRRUKK...

CREEEEEEEK

UGH... AKK...

...HE HOLDS SWAY OVER DEATH...

CREEEHOOM

...AND LIFE.

MUMM-RA LIVES!!!

CREEEHISSS

ALAS, TALENT WILL ONLY GET YOU SO FAR...

ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL! MUMM-RA HAS A PLAN THAT WILL FINALLY BRING THE THUNDERCATS TO THEIR KNE--

SILENCE, MUMM-RA!

...ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'VE PISSED OFF UPPER MANAGEMENT

THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL HAVE GROWN WEARY OF YOUR FAILURES!

DESPITE THE IMMENSE POWER WE BESTOW UPON YOU, YOU CONTINUE TO DISAPPOINT.

WOULD THAT WE COULD LEAVE THIS ACCURSED BLACK PYRAMID AND DO THE DEED OURSELVES...

A CHANGE MUST BE MADE.

WHAT?!

WE HAVE TAKEN IT UPON OURSELVES TO PLAN YOUR NEXT STRATAGEM.

THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL HAVE DISCOVERED A SWORD OF GREAT POWER...

...POWER ENOUGH TO RIVAL THAT OF LION-O'S SWORD OF OMENS.

WE BELIEVE YOU CAN DO THIS, MUMM-RA.

RETRIEVE THIS MIGHTY BLADE...

...AND DESTROY THE ACCURSED THUNDERCATS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

AS ALWAYS, WE WILL GRANT YOU WHAT YOU NEED.

ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL...

...TRANSFORM THIS DECAYED FORM TO...

...MUMM-RA THE EVER-LIVING.

AND TELL ME WHERE I MAY FIND THIS *SWORD OF GREAT POWER?*

ETERNIA

IT MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH UPON FIRST SIGHTING...

...BUT THIS UNASSUMING LITTLE WORLD IS BELIEVED BY MANY TO BE THE MAGICAL FIRST PLANET OF CREATION.

AND THIS GRAND, FAIRY-TALE KINGDOM?

IT'S ACTUALLY A FIEFDOM OF FOOLS.

NOOOOO!

WHAT TIME IS--?

GAH!

OW!

KLANG

NO.

NO.

NO.

NO.

I...

...AM...

...SOOOOO...

...DEAD!

OH, ADAM. NOT AGAIN.

DOOFUS.

IS EVERYBODY MAD? WHY IS EVERYBODY SO MAD?

NOTHING A GOOD FISTO COULDN'T FIX.

LOOKING GOOD, ADAM!

TEENAGERS.

17.49 MINUTES TARDY.

IRRESPONZZZIBLE. HE'LL BE LATE FOR HIZZZ OWN FUNERAL.

BEHAVIOR UNBECOMING A PRINCE.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? HAS ADAM ARRIVED? I CAN'T SEE? DOWN IN FRONT!

KILL!

I C-C-CAN'T BEAR TO L-L-LOOK!

RECOMMENDATION: UPDATE PRINCELY DRIVERS.

OH, MY SON...

...COMPLETELY CONFOUNDS ME, ADAM! THE ENTIRE CEREMONY WAS FOR YOU, YET STILL YOU WERE UNABLE TO PRODUCE YOURSELF IN A TIMELY MANNER!

FATHER... I SAID I WAS--

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT THIS IS?

W-W-WELL OF C-COURSE HE KNOWS WHAT IT IS, KING RANDOR!

PRINCE ADAM IS AN EXPERT ON ALL MATTERS PERTAINING TO ETERNIAN C-C-CUSTOM AND CEREMONY! G-GO ON, TELL HIM, ADAM!

ER... IS IT...A BELT?

LIKE...TO KEEP YOUR PANTS UP?

THIS IS THE ETERNIAN *HARNESS OF HONOR*. IT SIGNIFIES DUTY, AND THE WILL TO DEFEND THE REALM. IT WAS GIVEN TO ME BY MY FATHER WHEN I WAS EXACTLY YOUR AGE, ADAM.

I HAD HOPED TO GIVE IT TO YOU TODAY...

...BUT I SEE NOW THAT YOU ARE JUST NOT READY.

I WOULD DO ANYTHING TO DEFEND ETERNIA, FATHER.

ANYTHING.

THERE ARE TIMES I FEEL YOU JUST DON'T SEE ME AT ALL...

YOU MAY NOT KNOW THIS, BUT IT'S NO EASY THING TO REACH ETERNIA.

THE SKIES! THE SKIES! GODS...

ESPECIALLY FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION

...WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE SKIES?!

ETERNIA IS CLOAKED. PROTECTED BY SPELLS OLDER THAN EVEN THE STARS THAT SURROUND IT.

WHY, EVEN IF YOU WERE ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL, EVER-LIVING, MUMMY-FACED BEINGS IN ALL CREATION...

...YOU'D STILL HAVE TO HERNIATE YOURSELF JUST TO CRACK OPEN THE DOOR

SO TRUST ME WHEN I SAY...

...THIS IS PRETTY DAMNED IMPRESSIVE

GREAT THUNDERA!

RRRRUUUMBELLE

IT FEELS LIKE *THIRD EARTH* IS PULLING ITSELF APART!

ANOTHER WORLD HAS FORCED ITSELF INTO OUR SPACE, LION-O!

ACTUALLY, TYGRA, I THINK IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND...

EITHER WAY, IT'S TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!

HOW DO YOU FIGHT A PLANET?

WITH THE GREATEST OF CARE, MY *THUNDERCATS*...

JAGA!

THE VISITOR IN OUR SKIES IS CALLED ETERNIA. A MYSTICAL WORLD I ONCE THOUGHT TO BE ONLY LEGEND. BUT THE STORIES ARE TRUE.

I FEAR WHATEVER FATE BEFALLS ETERNIA BEFALLS US ALL.

OUR WORLDS WILL LIVE...OR DIE... TOGETHER.

RRRUUUIMBELLE

SNNAAAARRRRRR...

I GET...

...THE FEELING...

...JAGA...

...RRRFFFF.

...THAT WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE QUICKLY.

SHOW-OFF! SNARF! SNARF!

THEN LET'S SEE WHAT WE'RE GETTING OURSELVES INTO...

SWORD OF OMENS...

...GIVE ME SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT!!

WHEN CHAOS ERUPTS, CHAMPIONS RISE...

RRRRUUUUUMMMBLE

AIIIIEEEE!! RUN!

GRAYSKULL, SAVE US!!

...SOLDIERS...

ETERNOS IS FALLING...!

MASTERS-- PROTECT THE PEOPLE!

MAGES

THE GREAT AND POWERFUL ORKO HAS SAVED YOU FROM CERTAIN DEATH...

...BUT HIS GREAT AND POWERFUL BACK IS STARTING TO GIVE OUT, SO YOU MIGHT WANNA HURRY IT ALONG?

...AND WHATEVER THESE CIRCUS FREAKS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE.

BOONK

NO.

GRAYSKULL'S BANE.

BUT HONESTLY, WHEN FACED WITH SUCH OVERWHELMING MENACE...

WHAM!

ZOOM

N-N-NNOOO!!!

ADAM!!

WWHHOOAAA!

...WHAT GOOD ARE HEROES?

FATHER!!

KRAKK

=NNNF!=

=NNNF!=

SLOOSHHH

AAAAGH!

=COUGH! COUGH!=

ADAM!

THE K-KING...?

HE'S BREATHING, CRINGER...HE'S ALL RIGHT...

HE'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT...

I'M S-SO S-SCARED, ADAM. THOSE Q-Q-QUAKES...

THEY'RE SUBSIDING...

...BUT WE NEED TO BE READY FOR ANYTHING!

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL--

ADAM, WAIT!

STAY YOUR HAND, YOUNG PRINCE!

SORCERESS?!

THE EVIL FORCE THAT CREATED THE RIFT BETWEEN WORLDS IS ON THE HUNT FOR YOUR SWORD OF POWER.

THIS FORCE IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY VILLAIN YOU HAVE EVER FACED.

WE CAN'T RISK LOSING THE SWORD. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

I CAN LOCK IT SAFELY AWAY IN THE VAULTS OF *CASTLE GRAYSKULL* UNTIL THIS CRISIS IS AT AN END.

OF COURSE, SORCERESS... IF YOU THINK IT WISE.

MOST WISE.

ARRRGHH!

ADAM!!

WHEN GATHERING MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, IT IS CRITICAL TO CONSIDER THE SOURCE...

WELL, AT LEAST THE QUAKING STOPPED. THE DAMAGE COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE...

THINGS *WILL* GET MUCH WORSE, PANTHRO...

...THE SWORD OF OMENS SHOWED ME. THE MISSION WE'RE ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE IS UNLIKE ANYTHING THE THUNDERCATS HAVE FACED BEFORE.

AM I CRAZY TO RISK THE LIVES OF MY PEOPLE, MY *FAMILY*, ON THE WORDS OF A GHOST AND THE VISION FROM A SWORD?

ALWAYS THEY REVEAL PROBLEMS, BUT NEVER SOLUTIONS...

YOU'RE NOT CRAZY, LION-O. YOU'RE KING.

IF YOU WERE NOT WORTHY--OF YOUR TITLE, OF THE SWORD, OF YOUR PEOPLE--YOU'D HAVE NO SUCH REVELATIONS.

THE EYE OF THUNDERA SEES *GREATNESS* IN YOU--*WE* SEE GREATNESS IN YOU--EVEN IF YOU DO NOT. WHATEVER BATTLES MAY COME...

...THE THUNDERCATS WILL BE BY YOUR SIDE. AND YOU KNOW ME, MY YOUNG KING...

...I BELIEVE IN THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE RIGHT JOB!

...BECAUSE IF YOUR INFORMATION IS UNRELIABLE, NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU PREPARE...

...YOU MIGHT VERY WELL WIND UP ON THE WRONG END OF THE STICK.

YAAARGH!

ZRRAAKK

BEGONE, YOU FILTHY BEAST!

OH, HOW I *DETEST* CATS...

...I, MUMM-RA **THE EVER-LIVING.**

...N-NEVER HEARD OF YOU... =AAGHH=

DO YOU KNOW HOW *EASILY* I FOUND YOU AND YOUR AMAZING SWORD?

EVIL EXISTS IN *ALL* LIVING THINGS. AS THE EVER-LIVING EMBODIMENT OF EVIL, I CAN *FEEL* IT, *SMELL* IT, *TASTE* IT.

I CAN ALSO DETECT ITS *ABSENCE.*

THE COMPLETE *LACK* OF EVIL WITHIN YOU CALLED TO ME LIKE THE *BRIGHTEST BEACON.*

THEN, ALL I NEED DO WAS *EXTRACT* FROM YOUR MIND EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE YOU HOLD DEAR.

=GHHH=

WHY BATTLE WHEN I COULD SIMPLY DUPE YOU INTO HANDING OVER THE PRIZE?

NOW... ANY LAST WORDS, "HE-MAN?"

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

EH? WHAT'S THAT BOY? SPEAK UP?

...I...HAVE... THE POWER...

THE THOM

IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED, IT'S THAT **CHANGE** CAN BE THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE.

IT CREATES GODS OUT OF MORTALS.

WHOEVER YOU ARE, YOU TALK TOO MUCH!

POWWWW

GRAHH!!

IRRRAAKK

BAH! THOUGH MUMM-RA IS A MASTER OF *PAIN* AND *TORTURE*...

ARGHHHH!

IT IS LIFE...AND IT IS DEATH...

...I'VE NO MORE TIME TO WASTE ON THE LIKES OF YOU!

I HAVE YOUR *SWORD*...

...AND NOW I'LL HAVE YOUR *LIFE*!

YEEARGGH!

CHHOMP

IT'S A GOOD THING I DON'T FEED YOU MORE OFTEN, OLD FRIEND...

TH-THAT'LL TEACH HIM TO T-TALK BAD ABOUT C-C-CATS!

IT GIVETH AND IT TAKETH AWAY.

GREAT MOONS OF ETERNIA! HE'S...

SKKKRAAKKK

...GONE!

YOUR W-WOUND IS GONE AS WELL! THERE'S NOT A M-M-MARK ON YOU!

NEVER MIND ABOUT ME. WHATEVER THAT CREATURE WAS...

...IT HAS THE SWORD OF POWER!

THE REAL TRICK REGARDING CHANGE, THOUGH...

...IS LEARNING TO MASTER IT!

=UGGHHHHH=

WHAT? WHERE?

WHO DARES DRAG MUMM-RA THE EVER-LIVING FROM HIS ALL-IMPORTANT AFFAIRS?!

SO, THIS IS HE?

ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL? AM I BACK ON THIRD EARTH?

WITH YOUR PRECIOUS SWORD...

...AS PER OUR AGREEMENT.

IT IS YOURS TO DO WITH AS YOU WISH...

...SO LONG AS YOU UPHOLD YOUR END OF OUR BARGAIN.

SPIRITS? WHAT IS--

AND HIM?

ALSO YOURS TO DO WITH AS YOU WISH...

...AS PER OUR AGREEMENT.

WHAT?!

EXCELLENT.

HHSSSSSSS

AARRRRRRGH!!!

WE HAVE A DEAL.

HA HA HA HA!!

YOU MAY NOT KNOW IT TO LOOK AT ME, BUT I'VE JUST BECOME MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE!

FREDDIEE
WILLIAMS II

WHEN THUNDER STRIKES

FREDDIE E. WILLIAMS II 2016

GROWING UP, I WAS NEVER AFRAID OF THE USUAL THINGS.

SNAKES.

SKELETONS.

YES! EVEN THOUGH I'VE RENDERED HIM "NEVER-LIVING"...

MONSTERS.

...MUMM-RA'S DIRTY REMAINS ARE STILL SURPRISINGLY QUITE POTENT.

NO, WHAT CAUSED MY HEART TO QUICKEN AND MY PALMS TO SWEAT...IT WAS WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE.

FWOOSHH

THAT'S RICH.

YOU CALLING MY REMAINS DIRTY.

FATE.

DESTINY.

MUMM-RA?! YOU CAN STILL MAKE YOURSELF HEARD...GIVEN YOUR *PRESENT CONDITION?*

BUT... HOW...?

SO LONG AS *EVIL EXISTS... MUMM-RA LIVES!*

AND WHETHER OR NOT I WILL EVER LIVE UP TO MINE...

SO IT WOULD SEEM...

AND YET THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL CHOSE *YOU* OVER MUMM-RA?

YOU, MY ASHEN FRIEND, *FAILED* YOUR MASTERS ONE TOO MANY TIMES...

... WHILE *I* HAVE PROMISED TO GRANT THEM THE THING THEY'VE WANTED ABOVE ALL OTHERS--*FREEDOM FROM THE BLACK PYRAMID!*

THEIR FREEDOM--?

I MUST ADMIT I AM QUITE FASCINATED BY YOUR ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THIS VERY EDIFICE IN WHICH WE STAND, *SNAKE MOUNTAIN*, WAS CONCEIVED TO HONOR ONE OF THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL?

THE *SERPENT!* LONG LOST SISTER SPIRIT TO THE FOUR YOU SERVED.

THE SERPENT'S TRUE HISTORY WAS REVEALED TO ME THROUGH MY STUDY OF THE *GOLDEN DISKS OF KNOWLEDGE*...

... AN ANCIENT TREASURE TROVE OF LORE LEFT ON ETERNIA BY THE WISEST MEN AND WOMEN OF THE UNIVERSE.

THOUGH THE SNAKE SPIRIT WAS LONG GONE FROM EXISTENCE, I SOON DISCOVERED THAT HER BRETHREN WERE STILL ALIVE AND KICKING...

... WELL, YOU KNOW, IN THEIR ALL-POWERFUL ANCIENT SPIRIT-Y WAY!

IT'S *UNFORTUNATE* THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL NO LONGER HAVE A USE FOR YOU...

...BUT CHIN UP. *I* DO!

TAP TAP TAP

I HAVE BEEN SCHEMING FOR... WELL, *FOREVER*... TO USE HE-MAN'S SWORD TO MAKE THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL MY OWN...

... BUT THAT POWER IS SO TREMENDOUS IT WOULD KILL ANY WHO SUMMONED IT...

... IF THEY WEREN'T... "UP TO SNUFF" SHALL WE SAY, IN THE WORTHINESS DEPARTMENT.

BUT *YOU*, MUMM-RA, YOU ARE THE SOLUTION TO MY FATAL CHARACTER SHORTCOMINGS.

YOU'RE THE WHOLE REASON I BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL AND INSISTED THEY MAKE *YOU* PART OF THE BARGAIN.

WHY BOTHER BEING WORTHY WHEN I CAN MORE EASILY, AND *EVIL-Y*, BE *EVER-LIVING?*

ALL I NEED DO IS COMPLETE THIS POTION...

THEN I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING.

WELL, THERE'S THE MUSCLE-BRAINED BUFFOON WHO ALWAYS INSISTS ON BEING A BOTHER...

SOME SEE DUTY AND EXPECTATION AS NOTHING BUT BURDEN...BUT I TAKE THEM UPON MYSELF WILLINGLY. AS AN HONOR.

NOT BECAUSE I'M BETTER THAN ANYONE.

...BUT WITHOUT HIS *SWORD OF POWER*...

BUT BECAUSE I AM DESPERATE TO PROVE MYSELF.

TO PROVE THAT I AM NOT JUST A SILLY BOY WHO IS IN OVER HIS HEAD.

...HE-MAN HAS NEVER BEEN MORE VULNERABLE...

"...AN OPPORTUNITY I HAVE ALREADY TAKEN STEPS TO CAPITALIZE ON..."

UGHHH...

HE-MAN? WHA--

EASY, MY KING.

THE PLANETARY DISTURBANCES HAVE SUBSIDED, BUT ETERNIA IS STILL IN GRAVE DANGER.

A MONSTER DISGUISED AS--

ADAM! WHERE IS ADAM?! IS MY SON SAFE?!

OH YEAH. HE'S SAFE. COULDN'T BE SAFER.

I PUT ADAM OUT OF HARM'S WAY BEFORE I RETURNED TO TEND TO YOU. THE PRINCE IS FINE.

I...I'M SURE HE'S WORRYING ABOUT YOU.

WELL THEN, AS LONG AS EVERYONE IS SAFE...

...I SUPPOSE THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!

EVIL-LYN?!

SSSSLICE

UGHH!!

AMONG OTHERSSSS!

WHO ARE YOU?!

OOOFFFF!

FRIENDS FROM OUT OF TOWN!

BUT WE'VE JOINED FORCES.

ALL WE NEED DO IS KILL YOU. OOK!

ARRGH!

AND SKELETOR MAKES US RICH BEYOND OUR WILDEST DREAMS!

AND IT LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T EVEN BREAK A SWEAT DOING IT!

YRAGH...

HEH. NOT SO TOUGH WITHOUT YOUR SWORD, HUH?

AAAA

CAREFUL, YOU IDIOTS! HE'S STILL INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS!

CAREFUL WHO YOU CALL IDIOT, WITCH! WE MUTANTSSSS AGREED TO EXECUTE THIS OAF...

...NOT TO PUT UP WITH YOUR HIGH-HANDED PRONOUNCEMENTSSSS OF--

SSPPPLLOOOOSH

=GLURRKLE!=

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH SKELETOR IS PAYING YOU...

...BUT I PROMISE YOU...

...IT'S NOT NEARLY ENYHURRKK--

WHHHIIPP-A-KKKRAKKK

THAT'S ENOUGH OUT OF YOU!

MEN TALK, TALK, TALK!

KKRRAAKKBBOOFF

AARRGGHH!!

BEASTS KILL!

HHHUGHH!

KKRRAAKK

HOOWWWWWWL

TRIJAW!

TRAP-KLOPS!

IS THAT BIRD-BRAIN TALKING TO US?

WHAT IS IT, VULTUREPANTS?

READY THE EQUILIBRIUM DEFIBRILLATORS! NOW!

IF I KNEW MUTANTS WERE THIS BOSSY, I WOULDA PASSED ON THIS JOB.

JUST KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN AND WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL.

BRAIN HIM AGAIN, MONKIAN!

BUT WATCH THE *SPLATTER!* IT'S NOT EASY GETTING BLOOD OUT OF FUR!

NO. NOT EASY...

...BUT SO WORTH--

KKAATCHH

KKAA-RRUNKK

GAAHHH!

SSLLAAMM!

OOOFF!

YARRGH!

EQUILIBRIUM DEFIBRILLATORS...

...FIRE!

MMMM

UUUU

...I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

ZZZZAAAAPPPP

WHAT--?!

KRRRIIKKKLE KKRAAK KKRAAK

ALWAYS SO DENSE, HE-MAN! IN MIND, AND NOW, THANKS TO MY SPELL, IN BODY AS WELL!

YOUR DENSITY IS INCREASING EXPONENTIALLY. SOON YOU'LL BE SO HEAVY YOU'LL PLUMMET THROUGH SOLID ROCK...

KKKRRRUUUUUUUMMMMMBBLLE

...BURIED ALIVE IN THE BOWELS OF ETERNIA HERSELF!

BOOUM

BBBOOOOOOM

BBOOOOOM

OOK. WAS THAT...THE BOWELS OF ETERNIA?

NO ONE BURIES THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!!

KRRRAKKA-BOOOOMM

KKAA-RRUNCHH

SMASHA-THOOM

CONCUSS!

RRIPP

IMPALE!

ZZAAAAPPP!

REEEEEEE

PPOW

PPOOOWWW

BACK FOR MORE?

I'M WARNING YOU, HE-MAN! NO ONE TRIFFLESSSSS WITH...

...SLLLLIIIIIITHHE-

WOK

EXCELLENT WORK, YOUR MAJESTY!

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

... BURNT ASHES AND BINDINGS COMPEL THE GIVING...

... RELEASE UNTO ME THE **POWER EVER-LIVING!**

IT IS DONE! ALL I NEED DO NOW IS DRINK!

ALAS, YOU, MUMM-RA, SHALL BE LIVING *NEVERMORE.*

KA-CHUFF

NO! WAIT! SKELETOR!

SPARE ME AND I WILL REVEAL TO YOU YOUR ENEMY'S GREATEST SECRET!

HE-MAN'S *TRUE IDENTITY!*

WHETHER HE'S A CIRCUS STRONGMAN OR A SILLY SCHOOLGIRL, HIS SECRET MATTERS NOT AT ALL TO ME. MY COMPLETE VICTORY OVER HIM IS ALREADY AT HAND.

NO.

BOTTOMS UP.

GULP

NNNNOOOOO—

CRSSSH

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I HAVE THE POWER!!!

THOR

NEW VILLAINS, A NEW WORLD, A NEW SCHEME FROM SKELETOR?

I'M NOT SURE HOW IT ALL TIES TOGETHER YET, BUT I WON'T REST UNTIL THE REALM IS--

KRAAAKKAA-THOOOM

YEEAARRGH!!!

...YOUR...

...MAJESTY--

ADAM?

ADAM!!!

THEY SAY THAT WISDOM COMES WITH AGE...

...BUT I CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG.

AHHHH! THOUGH IT HAS TAKEN ME MANY SEASONS TO MAKE THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL *MY OWN*, I MUST ADMIT IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT!

UPON MY SHOULDERS RESTS THE FATE OF TWO WORLDS.

SO MUCH *POWER!*

KKRRAKKKK

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, I MAY INDEED STILL BE A BOY...

AND WHILE IT'S TRUE I COULD NOT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS WITHOUT THE ASININE SPIRITS OF EVIL...

...THEY CAN *ROT* IN THEIR BLACK PYRAMID FOR ALL I CARE.

...BUT I AM NO CHILD.

NOW THAT I AM FINALLY ABLE TO WIELD THE SWORD OF POWER, I WILL BREACH CASTLE GRAYSKULL AND CLAIM THE ULTIMATE SOURCE OF POWER THAT RESIDES WITHIN ITS WALLS FOR MYSELF!

AND BEST OF ALL, WITH HE-MAN OUT OF THE WAY...

...THERE'S NO ONE WHO CAN STOP ME!

HA HA HA HA HA!

I AM A WARRIOR.

I AM A KING.

SMASHAA-

YAAAAH!

BOOM

THUNDER!

THUNDER!

THUNDER!

I AM LION-O!

THUNDERCATS HOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

FREDDIE E. WILLIAMS II.

SWORDS & SORROWS

SNAKE MOUNTAIN

VILLAINS.

HA HA HA HA!

I DO LIKE YOUR SPIRIT, PUSSYCATS!

HEROES.

BATTLES ETERNAL.

CONFLICT, IT SEEMS, IS INEVITABLE.

BUT WHAT GOOD IS SPIRIT...

...WITHOUT THE STRENGTH TO BACK IT UP?

KRA-KLANG

=OOFF!=

=NNUGFF!=

DOES THAT THEN MEAN *PEACE* IS *IMPOSSIBLE?*

WELL THAT COULD HAVE GONE BETTER.

WE HAVE A MEASURE OF HIM NOW.

WE SURE DIDN'T GIVE *HIM* ANYTHING TO MEASURE, THAT'S FOR SURE!

SNARF! SNARF!

SAYS THE THUNDERCAT WHO HAD HIS EYES CLOSED THE WHOLE TIME.

IT'S AS JAGA SAID. WE HAVE TO STOP THE DEMON...

...AND RETURN THAT SWORD TO THE *PRINCE*, ITS RIGHTFUL OWNER!

LION-O!

SNARF!!

WAIT!

HA!

BACK SO SOON?

SHA-KLANG

THE UNIVERSE NEEDS ITS HEROES.

SOMEONE TO SLAY THE DRAGONS.

UNWISE, LITTLE LION-O.

GUT

=HUFF!=

KRACK

BUT AS OFTTIMES HAPPENS IN THE AFFAIRS OF HEROES...

OH YES, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. I KNOW WHO YOU ALL ARE.

=ARGH!=

PUNT

LET'S JUST SAY MY "MUMMY" TOLD ME.

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

=HURRGGH!!=

...THE DRAGONS ARE SELDOM COOPERATIVE.

YOU HAVE A WARRIOR'S HEART, LION-O...

=COUGH! COUGH!=

...BUT THAT WAS THE ACTION OF A HEADSTRONG *CHILD*, NOT THE LEADER OF A PEOPLE.

IT'S OUR JOB TO *PROTECT* YOU.

STAY.

GRRRR

GOOD VERSUS EVIL.

ALL RIGHT, CHEETARA! SPECIAL DELIVERY!

HANDLE WITH CARE!

tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk

YOU KITTENS ALWAYS KNOW WHAT TO GET A GIRL.

tnk tnk tnk tnk

IT SEEMS A SIMPLE PROPOSITION.

RELAX.

YOU'LL LOVE THIS.

A FUNDAMENTAL EQUATION.

tnk tnk tnk tnk tnk

WHA--?

IT'S WHAT ALL THE CREEPS ARE WEARING THESE DAYS.

A PRIMAL SOLUTION TO A WICKED PROBLEM.

AH.

BOOOOOM

MANY WILL ASK...

...IF EVIL IS THE PROBLEM...

BONE-HEAD, I'VE GOT TWO THINGS TO SAY TO YOU.

...AND EVIL CAUSES CONFLICT...

ONE.

THBOOM

...HOW CAN CONFLICT BE THE SOLUTION?

TWO.

BTAMM

=ARGH!=

PERHAPS, ULTIMATELY, IT CANNOT.

=WAAGHH!=

KRAKK

WELL LOOK AT THAT. GUESS I HAD *THREE* THINGS TO SAY!

BUT THOSE THREE SHOTS HE JUST LANDED SAY OTHERWISE...

ALL YOURS, TYGRA!

THEN WHAT SAY WE TURN UP THE HEAT?

KA-RAKK

MONSTERS MUST BE KEPT IN CHECK.

POWER MUST BE KEPT FROM THEIR **GRASP.**

NO! NOOOOO!

FAMOUS?

FOR MAKE NO MISTAKE...

AIIIYEEEE!

...THAT IS WHAT EVIL DESIRES MOST.

ER... SHOULD WE PUT HIM OUT?

POWER.

HA. PLEASE.

DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELVES.

POWER TO RULE.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

YOU FOOLISH FELINES HAVEN'T A *THIRD-EARTHLY* CLUE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST!

POWER TO OBTAIN MORE POWER.

I AM MORE THAN JUST THE HANDSOME ROGUE YOU SEE BEFORE YOU.

I AM SKELETOR!

HHHHHHSSCCCCCCCCCCCCCC

THE SUPREME DARK MAGE OF ETERNIA!

LORD OF DESTRUCTION!

ZZZRRAAKK

SSSNNNOOOUCCHH!

I AM EVERYWHERE. UNSTOPPABLE.

=OWWFF!=

=KKUUFF!=

I AM INFINITE!

WHILE YOU ARE ONLY SEVEN.

POWER TO DO GREATER EVIL.

HERE BEGINS THE FALL OF THE THUNDERCAT EMPIRE.

=ARGH!=

YOU CLAIM TO KNOW US, SKELETOR...

...BUT IF YOU THINK WE FALL SO EASILY, IT IS YOU WHO KNOWS NOTHING!

WE THUNDERCATS SURVIVED THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR HOMEWORLD...

...AND WE WILL *SURVIVE* YOU!

GASHH

=YARGH!=

ZZZRRAAKKKK

FEEL *MY* MAGIC, "DARK MAGE!"

=GGUGH!!=

HEAR MY *ROAR!*

SLAAASH

=ARRGHHH!!=

YOU WANT MAGIC?

"ABRACADABRA!"

PUD

THE FUTURE GENERATIONS OF THUNDERCATS *DISAPPEAR!*

AND THIS SHOULD TAKE CARE OF THE *ROARING.*

SKULL!

KLASH

=UGHH!=

WITH THE *SWORD OF POWER* NOW *MINE* TO COMMAND, I AM *STRONGER* THAN I'VE *EVER BEEN BEFORE!*

YET HERE YOU *STAND DEFIANT* BEFORE ME, KEEPER OF THE *SWORD OF OMENS.*

AARRGGHH!

SLASH

I DO SEE *SOMETHING* IN YOU, BOY.

OR IS WHAT I SENSE *ALL IN THE SWORD?*

I'M *MUCH MORE* THAN ANY SWORD...

...BECAUSE I HAVE *FAMILY.*

THUNDERCATS HO.

I *HATE* REUNIONS.

I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

THWAKK

THERE CAN'T BE MANY PEOPLE *HAPPY* TO SEE *YOU* AGAIN, EH?

SPAK

=HHHUURKK!=

WELCOME BACK, OLD FRIEND.

=RRRAAAGH!=

SHOW HIM WHAT A *TRUE* SWORD OF POWER CAN DO!

=AAARRGHHH!=

YOU ALL THINK YOU'RE SO VERY--

WSHH WSHH WSHH SNAPP

--AKK!

WE'RE ALL VERY "AKK"?

I SIMPLY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THIS FELLOW.

KRRO-AAAKKK

FLLIINNGGG

=HURRAAAGGK!=

I SIMPLY DO NOT *LIKE* THIS FELLOW!

WHAT'S TO LIKE?!

FWUP FWUP

FWUP

=CHOKE!=

=COUGH!=

=GASP!=
=WHEEZE!=

ALL RIGHTY. THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH...

...OF THAT?

ENOUGH?

SL-AAAM

=GARRGGHH!=

NOT IF YOU'RE STILL STANDING, IT ISN'T!

SMMM-MAASSH

=WWAAGGHH!=

SHAKA-SHAKA RUMBLE

WHAT IN THE--?

ENOUGH!

YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME!

I WIELD THE *SWORD OF POWER!*

THE *POWER OF GRAYSKULL!*

AND THE *POWER EVER-LIVING!*

NO!!

I AM THE *POWER EVER-LIVING!*

MUMM-RA?!

YOU WERE EXPECTING SOMEONE ELSE?

BUT... I DON'T... HOW??

MUST I REPEAT MYSELF?

SO LONG AS *EVIL EXISTS,* MUMM-RA LIV--

MUMM-RA, I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A *BATTLE* HERE!

MUMM-RA CARES NOT! YOU MUST *PAY* FOR--

OH, MUMM-RA *DOES* CARE! FOR I FIGHT THE *THUNDERCATS!*

...

... PROCEED.

HAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

HEY! THAT'S NO WAY TO TREAT A THUNDERTANK!

SO YOU'VE TEAMED WITH *MUMM-RA* TO OBTAIN THE *POWER EVER-LIVING?*

THUNDERCATS

THEN PERHAPS HE SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU--

=ARRGGH!=

--NEVER LOOK IN THE MIRROR!

AAAA

THE EVIL DO NOT TRUST.

THEY WILL NOT SHARE.

SKKKPAKKK

YOU MUMMIFIED MORON, YOU'VE COST ME THE SWORD!

I COST YOU?!

YOU TURNED ME TO ASH!

YOU POURED ME DOWN YOUR GULLET!

NO ONE MAKES A POTION OF MUMM-RA!

ALLIED, THE CHAOS THEY COULD CAUSE IS INCALCULABLE.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO BACK TO SLEEP!

OH, MY SKULL-HEADED FRIEND, MUMM-RA IS JUST WAKING UP!

WHAT--?? MUMM-RA! STOP!!

FORTUNATELY, ALLIANCE IS SELDOM ON THEIR MINDS...

MUMM-RA IS JUST GETTING STARTED!

PUNCH!

=UGH!=

GROWING STRONGER!

CHOKE!

=GAHHHKKKKKK!=

DON'T YOU SEE...

DOINK

OW!

... THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO SLEEP!

YOU BELIEVED YOU COULD CONTAIN MUMM-RA, YOU COMMONPLACE CONJUROR...

TRAAANNNZZZ--

...ZZFFOORRMM!!

...BUT YOU WERE WRONG!

MUMM-RA LIVES!

NO! YOU FOOL!

HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHAT YOU'VE JUST DONE WITH YOUR *MEDDLING?*

KRAKK

WHA--? SKELETOR! CEASE!

ARGHH!

TRANZZFORM!!

I'VE LOST THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!!

TRANZZFORM!!

PREPARE TO LOSE MORE!

TRANZZFORM!!

YOU DECOMPOSING DOLT! I'LL *DESTROY* YOU!!

TRANZZFORM!!

WITH WHAT ARMY, JACKASS?!

TRANZZFORM!!

IMBECILE!

TRANZZFORM!!

SKELE-BORE!

TRANZZFORM!!

DUMB-RA! THE EVER-DROOLING!

=HUFF! HUFF! HUFF!=

THIS IS *POINTLESS.*

WE'RE =HUFF!= TOO EVENLY MATCHED.

AND, =HUFF!= THANKS TO YOUR ACCURSED POTION, *INEXTRICABLY LINKED.*

PERHAPS WE'RE GOING ABOUT THIS THE WRONG WAY...

SAY ON...

WHAT ABOUT A PROPER... *PARTNERSHIP?*

THE TWO *EVILEST BASTARDS* FROM TWO DISTANT WORLDS...

... WORKING TOGETHER TO CAPTURE THE AWESOME, ULTIMATE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, WHICH LIES LOCKED AWAY IN THE HEART OF *CASTLE* GRAYSKULL?

BAH!

WHAT IS THIS GRAYSKULL'S POWER TO MUMM-RA?

IT'S ONLY THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE.

MUMM-RA IS... LISTENING...

WITH THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL, YOU COULD *OBLITERATE* THE *THUNDERCATS* ONCE AND FOR ALL--AND FINALLY TAKE THE *EYE OF THUNDERA* FOR YOUR *OWN.*

HMMMMMM...

AND, TO BE FRANK, IT IS THE ONLY WAY WE WILL EVER BE *SEPARATED* FROM ONE ANOTHER--

SAY NO MORE. MUMM-RA *AGREES.* THIS PRESENT SITUATION IS *INTOLERABLE.*

AND MUMM-RA HAS AN IDEA HOW TO BEST LAY *SIEGE* TO THIS CASTLE *GRAYSKULL.*

UNFORTUNATELY, VILLAINS ARE INFINITELY ***UNPREDICTABLE.***

DO YOU STILL HAPPEN TO HAVE THE GOLDEN DISKS OF KNOWLEDGE AT HAND... *PARTNER?*

PRAY FOR ***DISCORD...***

...AND THEY PRESENT YOU WITH AN ***ACCURSED ALLIANCE.***

WHY, YES I DO, *PARTNER!*

HEROES DO WHAT THEY DO BECAUSE IT NEEDS DOING.

THEY BELIEVE IN THE GOOD FIGHT.

IN RIGHT.

IN JUSTICE.

BUT WITH VICTORY...

...WITH TRIUMPH...

...CAN ALSO COME SORROW.

HEROES RISE.

IT IS A SAD TRUTH THAT HEROES ALSO FALL.

KING RANDOR, THANK YOU FOR GRANTING ME THIS AUDIENCE.

I AM SO VERY SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS...

I-I CAME TO RETURN THIS SWORD TO ITS OWNER...TO YOUR SON...

I DIDN'T KNOW...

I UNDERSTAND HE WAS A GREAT HERO.

I'M ONLY JUST UNDERSTANDING THAT NOW MYSELF...

ADAM...MY SON...HE KEPT HIS SECRET FROM ME...

BUT HOW COULD I BE SO BLIND? HOW COULD I NOT SEE HIM FOR WHAT HE TRULY WAS?

WHETHER IN THE GUISE OF PRINCE OR HERO...

...I AM SURE YOU FELT YOUR SON'S LOVE FOR YOU, KING RANDOR.

THAT IS *KIND* OF YOU, KING LION-O.

I'M NOT *TRULY* KING YET...NOT LIKE YOU, SIRE...

...BUT I HOPE ONE DAY TO BE *WORTHY* OF THE MANTLE OF MY FATHER, *KING CLAUDUS.*

TRUST ME, LION-O, YOUR FATHER WOULD ALREADY BE MORE THAN PROUD OF YOU.

WORRY LESS ABOUT LIVING UP TO *HIS* IDEAL...

...AND MORE ABOUT BEING TRUE TO *YOUR OWN.*

NOW, LET'S GET THAT EYE OF YOURS LOOKED AT, SHALL WE?

RRRRROOOOOOOOOMMMMBLE

BY JAGA!

GRAYSKULL'S BANE!

W-W-WHAT NOW?!

POWER.

I MUST ADMIT, MUMM-RA, YOUR PLAN TO ENSLAVE YOUR FORMER MASTERS WAS A MASTERSTROKE OF DARKEST GENIUS!

WHAT EVIL DESIRES MOST.

MUMM-RA KNEW YOU WOULD LIKE IT. AND NOW...

POWER TO OBTAIN MORE POWER!

WHO WILL KEEP POWER FROM EVIL'S GRASP?

ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL, LET NOTHING STAND IN YOUR WAY!

BRING US THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!

SO COMMANDS MUMM-RA!

AND SKELETOR!

WHO WILL STAND WITH ME AND SLAY THE DRAGON NOW?

FREDDIE E WILLIAMS II.

CLASH OF TITANS

FREDDIE E.
WILLIAMS II
01/07/15

DEEP DOWN, I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL THINGS MUST COME TO THEIR INEVITABLE END...

...BUT KNOWING SOMETHING WITH YOUR HEAD...

...AND ACCEPTING IT IN YOUR HEART...

MASTERS, THE CITY MUST HOLD!

AAAA

LOSS IS AN INESCAPABLE PART OF LIFE...

ANNNND... WE'RE OFF TO AN AUSPICIOUS START!

INDEED.

AND WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT ONE ANOTHER.

MUMM-RA AGREES.

...WHETHER IT'S NATURALLY OCCURRING...

YOUR GOLDEN DISKS OF KNOWLEDGE ALLOWED US TO FREE THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL FROM THE BLACK PYRAMID...

... AND YOUR EVER-LIVING CONNECTION TO THE SPIRITS ALLOWED US TO ENSLAVE THEM!

...OR BROUGHT ABOUT BY CONSPIRING FORCES OF EVIL...

IT IS OUR POWERS COMBINED THAT ENABLE US TO COMMAND THE SPIRITS SO COMPLETELY.

WE DO MAKE QUITE THE COUPLE.

HOW DOES IT FEEL, ORDERING AROUND YOUR FORMER MASTERS?

IT FEELS LIKE...

...FREEDOM!

...HOW A PERSON DEALS WITH THE END OF THINGS SAYS AS MUCH ABOUT THEM AS HOW THEY LIVED...

DEPLOY THREE SQUADRONS OF WIND RAIDERS TO DEFEND THE EAST WALL.

YES, MY KING!

...MAYBE MORE.

WE'RE GOING TO NEED EVERY ABLE BODY TO REPEL THESE MONSTERS, WHATEVER THEY ARE.

YOU EVER HANDLED ONE OF THESE BEAUTIES?

HEH. NOTHING SO PRIMITIVE.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER SCALING YOUR OSCILLATOR TO BOOST YOUR FORCE-PATTERN OUTPUT...

=HRRMPH.=

YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER TEACHING YOUR PUSSYCATS TO SHOW MORE RESPECT WHEN ADDRESSING THE GENERAL OF THE GUARD...

SSSZZZZ

...OF ETERNIA?

AT EASE, PRINCESS.

STEP AWAY FROM THE KING.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, CHEETARA.

KING RANDOR, THESE MONSTERS RESEMBLE THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL...FROM THIRD EARTH.

WE THUNDERCATS PLEDGE TO STAND BY ETERNIA...

...AGAINST THESE CREATURES, AGAINST SKELETOR AND MUMM-RA, UNTIL THEY ARE DEFEATED ONCE AND FOR ALL...

BUT WHAT THEY'RE DOING HERE...FREE OF THE BLACK PYRAMID? I CAN'T SAY.

ONCE AND FOR ALL! *HAH!*

HAVE YOU LEARNED NOTHING IN YOUR CEASELESSS SSTRUGGLESS AGAINSST MUMM-RA, FURRY LITTLE KINGLING?

YOU CANNOT DEFEAT HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL! HE ALWAYSSS COMES BACK!

RESSSSTORED!

RESSSSURRECTED!

EVER-LIVING!

SHUT IT AND MOVE IT, YOU!

I'M GOIN'! I'M GOIN'!

QUIT SSSSSHOVIN'!

ALL OF THIS...

...GIANT MONSTERS POUNDING AT OUR WALLS, AND NO HE-MAN AT OUR SIDE...

...OH, ADAM...

...TRULY, THIS IS ETERNIA'S DARKEST HOUR...

HMMMMM. MAYBE NOT...

I UNDERSTAND THE URGENCY, LION-O...

...BUT I'M NOT PLEASED WITH YOU UNDERTAKING THIS CRAZY MISSION ALONE.

I'M NOT ALONE, PANTHRO.

RIGHT, CRINGER?

HE HASN'T LEFT ADAM'S SIDE SINCE...

...WELL, SINCE.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, MY KING.

I HAVE TO GROW UP SOMETIME, PANTHRO.

A WISE MAN ONCE TOLD ME A GOOD KING LIVES UP TO HIS OWN IDEALS, NOT THOSE OF OTHER PEOPLE.

WELL, THIS IS MY DUTY AS THE LEADER OF THE THUNDERCATS. I CAN DO NO LESS.

NO, I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU COULD...

...MY KING.

MY MOTHER, WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG, LOST EVERYTHING...

...HER FAMILY, HER FRIENDS, HER ENTIRE WORLD.

UH... WELCOME TO THIRD EARTH...?

STAY ALERT, CRINGER...

...THAT'S A PLUNDAARIAN FIGHTER...

BUT SHE DIDN'T LET THAT DESTROY HER.

...WE MAY NOT BE THE ONLY ONES HERE.

"THERE ARE FATES WORSE THAN DEATH," SHE'D SAY.

SHE FOUND THE STRENGTH TO FIGHT BACK...

THIS IS ALL MY FAULT...

YOUR FAULT?

HE'D STILL BE ALIVE...IF I COULD HAVE...BATTLED. I WAS THERE...BUT I WASN'T REALLY THERE...

CRINGER, YOU COULDN'T HAVE--

...TO CREATE A NEW LIFE FOR HERSELF.

D-DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS WILL WORK, K-KING LION-O?

IT'S A LONG SHOT, I KNOW...

...BUT IF MUMM-RA CAN USE THE TWISTED ENERGIES OF THIS PLACE TO RESTORE HIMSELF TIME AND TIME AGAIN?

PERHAPS WE CAN USE THOSE VERY SAME ENERGIES...

...TO RESTORE YOUR HE-MAN.

=UGH.= HE'S HEAVIER THAN HE LOOKS.

CRINGER, HELP ME PLACE HIM IN THIS INFERNAL SARCOPHAGUS.

I'M A FIGHTER, LIKE MY MOTHER.

CRREEEETHHOOOM

THAT'S IT?

WHAT? NO. NO! THERE SHOULD BE ENERGY AND EVERYTHING.

AT LEAST...I WAS HOPING--

WHOA!

KRRAAKKLLE

YIPE!

WELL! THAT'S MUCH MORE LIKE--

KAA-RRASHH

THERE'S DEFINITELY SOMEONE ELSE HERE, CRINGER. I'LL STAND GUARD OVER ADAM. YOU GO INVESTIGATE.

T-THAT'S, WELL...A WONDERFUL PLAN, B-BUT...

CRINGER, WE BOTH KNOW THAT YOU, AT HEART, ARE A TRUE HERO. YOU ARE ALSO A CAT, LIKE ME, AND MY PEOPLE.

I...UH... WHAT?

THIS IS THE EYE OF THUNDERA, THE SOURCE OF MY PEOPLE'S POWER.

LET US SEE IF THUNDERA'S EYE CAN UNLEASH THE HERO...INSIDE YOU.

THUNDER!

THUNDER!

THUNDER!

THUNDERCATS! HOOOOOOOOO!

YOU SPOKE TRUE, MONKIAN. THIS PYRAMID OF BLACKNESS IS A TOTAL TREASURE TROVE!

MORE JEWELS IN ONE PLACE THAN THESE EYES OF MINE HAVE EVER SEEN...

OH, WE'VE HAD *OUR* EYES ON THIS SCORE FOR...WELL, FOREVER!

OOK! BUT WHEN THE MASTERS ARE AWAY, THE LACKEYS WILL PLAY, AM I RIGHT? *OOK!* AM I RIGHT?

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

HUH?

WHA--?

EH?

OOK?

GGGGGGGRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

RRRRAAAHRRRH!!

CHOKE!

GAAKK!

GAAHHH!

SHRRZZ

ARRRGH!

CHOMP!

YAAARRGH!

PLEASE. PLEASE LET THIS WORK.

skratch skratch

BY JAGA... CAN IT BE?

PRINCE ADAM?

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL

KRAKKA-THOOM

ALL THINGS END...

WHOOOAA!

...BUT SOME...

...SOME FATES ARE WORSE THAN DEATH.

...I HAVE THE PÖWERRRRRR!!!

HE-MAN?

GRRAAAHH!

HE-MAN?!

SHHRRAAKK

RRAAAAHH!

KAAATAAANNG

UGH! I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY! I AM LION-O OF THE THUNDERCATS, FRIEND OF ETERNIA...

...ANNNND YOU COULD NOT CARE LESS, COULD YOU?

GRRRR!

IAAAHHH

I'VE BEEN KISSED BY YOUR BLADE ONCE ALREADY.

I'VE NO DESIRE TO REPEAT THE EXPERIENCE.

RAHH!

KRAKK

=AAAH!=

FRAGGHH!

CLEARLY, PUTTING YOU IN THAT SARCOPHAGUS WASN'T THE BRIGHTEST IDEA I'VE EVER HAD...

FRAAAAHHH!

KKRAANNGG

YES, IT BROUGHT YOU BACK...

GRRAAHH!

...BUT IT'S DRIVEN YOU QUITE MAD!

KKLAANNGG

I'M SORRY FOR THAT, HE-MAN...

...BUT I WILL NOT LET YOU DESTROY ME BECAUSE OF IT.

YOU MAY BE IN NO CONDITION TO AID YOUR PEOPLE, BUT I HAVE SWORN AN OATH TO YOUR FATHER...

...AND SO I MUST STOP YOU... SOMEHOW.

OUR WEAPONS ARE QUITE EVENLY MATCHED...

...SO WHAT SAY WE DO AWAY WITH YOURS?

THERE, THAT SHOULD MAKE THINGS MUCH EASIER.

POW

KRAKK

URGH!

RIPPP

RRAAAAHH!

OR MAYBE NOT?

HHAAAARRHH!

THHRRAAKK!

=AARRGH!=

GRRRR! GHHRRRR!

SPLOOSH

=MMMPH!=

=MMMPHHH!=

=MMMPPHHH!=

AAAARRGHH!

=GASP!=

SSSTTTAABB!

=PANT= =PANT= YOUR STRENGTH =PANT= INCREDIBLE.

=PANT= RIDICULOUS, REALLY. =PANT=

IF I AM TO SURVIVE YOU, I MUST RAISE MY GAME =PANT= NO MATTER THE STRAIN THIS EFFORT MAY CAUSE ME...

GRRRRRR

SWORD OF OMENS...

GIVE ME POWER BEYOND POWER!

FIGHT!

KKRRAAKKK!

THE POWER PLAYING-FIELD HAS BEEN LEVELED, MY FRIEND...

RRRAGGHH!

RRRIIPP

RRRIIPPPPPP

=URGG!=

NOT AS EASY AS YOU MAKE IT LOOK, THOUGH, I MUST ADMIT...

FRAAAAAHHH!

CHHAARRGGGE!

AS FOR YOUR MADNESS, HE-MAN...

SPLAAMM!

GRRAAAHH!

SWORD OF OMENS...

...GIVE ME SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT!

YES, SOME FATES ARE FAR, FAR WORSE THAN DEATH!

NNNOOOOOO!

YYAAAAHHHH!

NO! I'D HOPED TO BREAK THROUGH THE MADNESS...

...BUT IF EVEN THE SWORD OF OMENS CANNOT MAKE YOU SEE...

...THEN IT MUST CUT YOU DOWN!

HE-MAN?

HE-MAN! THE SWORD OF OMENS WILL NOT LET ME STRIKE YOU!

WH-WHAT?

THE MADNESS. IT HAS PASSED! YOU'VE COME BACK!

I SAW...THE END OF EVERYTHING. A UNIVERSE RULED BY SKELETOR...AND ANOTHER...

MUMM-RA. BUT...THIS HASN'T COME TO PASS AS YET.

AND SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT DOESN'T USUALLY GRANT VISIONS OF THE FUTURE.

I IMAGINE IT'S NEVER BEEN COMBINED WITH THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL BEFORE...

UMM... BY THE WAY...WHO ARE YOU?

I AM LION-O.

A FRIEND.

ALL THINGS MUST PASS...

LIKK LIKK LIKK

...BUT WE MUST FIGHT AGAINST THE DARKNESS AS LONG AS THERE IS BREATH IN OUR BODIES.

I AM THE SON OF AN ASTRONAUT FROM EARTH AND AN ETERNIAN KING...

GOOD KITTY.

HE-MAN?

HE-MAN!

OH, ADAM... I THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU...

IT'S OKAY, OLD FRIEND. I'M ALL RIGHT NOW...

...THANKS TO YOU... AND LION-O HERE.

...LIVING PROOF THAT WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

AND WITH MY BRAVE, RESOURCEFUL NEW ALLY AT MY SIDE, I KNOW...

...WE HAVE THE POWER!

HURRY NOW, MY FRIENDS.

WE HAVE TO GET BACK TO ETERNIA, BEFORE IT'S...

Colwell

THE FALL OF GRAYSKULL

"THE ENEMY IS UPON US! THEY HAVE DESTROYED OUR HOMES! OUR GLORIOUS CITY.

"AND STILL THEY COME.

"THEY DESECRATE OUR LAND AND DECIMATE OUR BRAVE.

"AND STILL THEY COME.

"BECAUSE ETERNIA HOUSES POWER BEYOND COMPARE!

"BUT TO THEM WE SAY

THIS POWER WILL NEVER BE YOURS!

CASTLE GRAYSKULL WILL NOT FALL!

AMMMMM

YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT JUST MAKING THIS UP AS YOU GO?

WE'VE ROUTED YOUR ETERNIAN BLASTER CORE THROUGH THREE OF OUR QUANTUM FUSIONATORS...

RATCHET! RATCHET!

...AND THEN MODIFIED IT WITH A THUNDERIAN ENERGY-EXAGGERATOR.

IT DOESN'T LOOK THE *LEAST* BIT SAFE.

AND IT HOPEFULLY *WON'T* BE...

...TO *THEM.*

NO, I MEAN THAT EXPOSED HYPERQUADRIFIER-- SHOULDN'T IT BE GROUNDED?

HE'S *RIGHT!*

ER... THAT LITTLE OVERSIGHT COULD HAVE BLOWN UP IN ALL OUR FACES.

THERE. THAT'S GOT IT.

BWWWWWWWT

KA-RRUNCH

NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET IN CLOSE ENOUGH TO GET OFF A CLEAN SHOT.

WHICH IS WHY I'M CALLING IN...

TO BE CONTINUED

...AIR SUPPORT!

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD! COVERING FIRE-- NOW!

ETERNIAN GUARD! FIRE AT WILL!

I THINK IT'S SWEET THAT DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL IS CAPTAIN OF THE ENTIRE ROYAL GUARD...

...BUT...

...SOMETIMES ONE WARRIOR ON HER OWN CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE...

...THAN A WHOLE SQUADRON OF FIGHTERS!

HAAAAA!!!!!

SSSSLLLAAASSHH

AARRRRRGGGGHHHH!

SWAKKK

UGHHH!

I HATE STRAY CATS.

FAA-ZOOM

MIGHT THIS *SQUADRON LEADER* REMIND THE *LONE* WARRIOR...

KLASP!

...THAT GOING OFF HALF-COCKED IS NEITHER COURAGEOUS NOR BOLD...

=UFF= --POINT TAKEN.

...THOUGH THAT WAS A RATHER PRETTY EYE-GOUGING.

YOUR FLYING'S NONE TOO SHABBY EITHER.

WONDERFUL!

DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE'VE DECIMATED THEIR CAPITAL CITY, THESE INSECTS CONTINUE TO FIGHT ON.

YES, THEY SELDOM DO REALIZE WHEN THEY ARE WELL AND TRULY BEATEN.

OUR ADVERSARIES MAY COME FROM DIFFERENT WORLDS...

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

... BUT THEY SHARE THE SAME IDIOTIC IDEALISM.

HA HA HA HA HA!

SO YOU'RE *REALLY* THIS WORLD'S GREATEST MAGE, ORKO?

AS I AM ABOUT TO DEMONSTRATE, WILYKIT!

JUST KEEP THOSE BIG BEASTIES DISTRACTED WHILE I CAST UNCLE MONTORK'S SPELL OF MINIATURIZATION!

IF I CAN REMEMBER IT...

BOOOM

BOOOM

=HA!= THIS'LL BRING YOU DOWN TO SIZE, YOU *BIG BRUISER!*

ZZZAAAPPP

"GGAAAAHHHHHHHYYIIIEEE!"

ORKO!!

DON'T WORRY, MY FRIENDS! THE SPELL SHOULD WEAR OFF MOMENTARILY...

...I HOPE.

I REALLY GOTTA WORK ON MY AIM...

POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

...I CALL UPON YOU NOW.

RISE UP AND *SHIELD* YOUR *FORTRESS OF MYSTERY AND POWER* FROM THOSE THAT WOULD *TRESPASS* UPON THIS SACRED GROUND...

HOPEFULLY YOU WILL CONSIDER ME *LESS TRESPASSER...*

...AND MORE *ALLY.*

BY THE *ELDERS!* WHO ARE YOU? HOW--

I AM CALLED JAGA, LADY SORCERESS.

WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME, AND IT TAKES *GREAT EFFORT* TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THE CURRENT KING OF MY PEOPLE. I BESEECH YOU--*TRUST* YOUR *MAGICAL INSTINCTS* AND HEAR ME OUT...

PROCEED.

I WAS ONCE LORD OF THE THUNDERCATS, MILADY. AMONGST THE COLLECTED RICHES OF MY PEOPLE WAS THE FABLED *TREASURE OF THUNDERA.*

WITHIN THE TREASURE, I BELIEVE THERE IS AN ARTIFACT THAT CAN AID IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CREATURES THAT NOW ASSAIL THIS EDIFICE.

MY LADY SORCERESS, MIGHT YOU PROVIDE A *WAY BACK* TO *THUNDERA,* MY HOMEWORLD, *BEFORE IT WAS DESTROYED,* THAT WE MAY *RETRIEVE* THIS *ARTIFACT?*

MY DEAR JAGA...

...STEP RIGHT THIS WAY.

RRRRUUMMMMMBBLL

ENTERING TARGETING RANGE!

CANNON AT FULL POWER!

HOLD 'ER STEADY, BOYS...

ZZZZZAPPPPPPO

...WE'RE GONNA TEACH THESE MONSTERS SOME MANNERS!

YOU'LL SHRINK THIS TIME, YOU UN-JOLLY GIANTS!

WWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW

WHHOOAA!

WHAT THE--?!

HEEYYY!

ORKO!

YOU MAGICAL MENACE!

SORRY, DUNCAN... CAN'T QUITE HEAR YOU...

...AND, UM, I'M URGENTLY NEEDED ***WAAAAAAAY*** OVER HERE ON THE ***OPPOSITE*** SIDE OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

C'MON, LADS! UP! *LIFT!* HURRY!

SO DUNCAN'S YOUR NAME, EH?

JUST GET THE BLOODY CANNON IN POSITION.

WE CAN GET ALL CHUMMY LATER.

SKKKBBBOOOM

CANNON BRACED!

BATTERIES TO FULL!

THEN HERE WE GO...

FIRE!

SSPLOOOOMMMM

OOOAAARRGGH!

YEEEEEESSS!

HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

WHAT DO WE *HAVE TO DO* TO STOP THESE THINGS?

HA HA HA HA HA HA

BOOM

=GARGH!=

=NYARG!=

BOOM

HA HA HA HA

ZZZZZZZRRRKKKKKK

YAARRRGHH!

CRRAAA-BOOOOM

AAAAAHH!

FFAAAA-BOOOOOMM

ZZZZZZRRRKKKKK

NOO--ARGH!

??

?

WWWWWSSHHHAH

SKELETOR?!

ZZZZZZZRRRKKKKK

ZZZZZZRRRKKKKK

ARGH! I HAVE NO IDEA! A CASTLE CAN'T JUST UP AND DISAPPEAR...

... THOUGH THERE ARE VANISHING SPELLS...

... AND DIMENSIONAL PORTALS...

... OH WHY IS THIS ALWAYS SO DIFFICULT?

SIGH!

IS HE ALL RIGHT?

TYGRA HAS THE ABILITY TO CAST ILLUSIONS...

...BUT HE'S NEVER DONE ANYTHING ON *THIS SCALE* BEFORE.

SO...HE'S MADE CASTLE GRAYSKULL *VANISH?*

IT'S STILL HERE...

...JUST *LOOKS* LIKE IT ISN'T.

ILLUSION.

DON'T... KNOW...HOW LONG...

QUIET, YOU.

JUST CONCENTRATE FOR AS LONG AS YOU'RE ABLE.

FFLLAASSSHH

SORCERESS!

HEROIC WARRIORS! ONE OF YOUR COMRADES SHIELDS US FOR THE MOMENT, BUT *TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.*

NOBLE JAGA AND I HAVE RETRIEVED FROM ANOTHER TIME AND ANOTHER PLACE OUR *ONE TRUE CHANCE FOR VICTORY.*

JAGA!

NUMBERED AMONG THE GREATEST TREASURES OF MY HOMELAND WAS THIS...

...A *DISK OF KNOWLEDGE,* CONTAINING WISDOM FROM THE WISEST MINDS IN ALL THE UNIVERSE...

...OR, AS WE ARE NOW LEARNING, THE *MULTIVERSE.*

MANY YEARS AGO, IT WAS FROM THIS VERY DISK I FIRST HEARD TELL OF ETERNIA, AND OF THIS *MAGICAL CASTLE.*

SKELETOR AND MUMM-RA EMPLOYED GOLDEN DISKS OF KNOWLEDGE JUST LIKE THIS ONE TO BRING THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL TO YOUR DOORSTEP.

SHHRRAARRKK

WITH A SPELL, WE CAN USE *JAGA'S GOLDEN DISK* TO MAKE THESE CREATURES *VULNERABLE*...

...LIKE SO!

DESTROY THE *GOLDEN DISKS* NOW REVEALED UPON THE BREAST OF THE ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL...

...AND YOU WILL DESTROY THEIR CORPOREAL FORMS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

TODAY, YOU ARE *ALL* DEFENDERS OF GRAYSKULL! TODAY...

YOU HAVE THE POWER!

SSHHRRAARRKK

SSHHRRAARRKK

SSHHRRAARRKK

SSHHRRAARRKK

STRATOS! BUZZ-OFF! YOU'RE WITH WILYKIT AND WILYKAT.

YEZZZZ, MAN-AT-ARMZZZ!

TEELA AND CHEETARA! TAKE ANOTHER RUN AT THE CROCODILE!

ON IT!

REMATCH!

I WANT YOU LOT ALL OVER THAT DAMNED VULTURE!

YESSIR!

UNDERSTOOD!

YESSIR!

WHAT ABOUT US, SNARF? WHAT ARE WE, VEGETARIAN ROAST GOOBLE?!

AND MAN-AT-ARMS...

...YOU TAKE DOWN THE BOAR.

WHERE IN *BLAZES* DID YOU *THINK* I WAS GOING?!

AND YOU KNOW *FULL WELL* YOU TWO ARE *COMING WITH ME!*

TOWERING TYRANT AT 12 O'CLOCK!

I'LL DRAW HIZZZ FIRE.

FOLLOW MY LEAD, STAY CLOSE, AND PROCEED WITH CAUTION, CHILDREN.

CHILDREN?!

SHHA-PWAAK

FOR ANDREENOZZZZ!

RRAAOOOORRR!

FOR AVION!

FOOM

FOOM

SWAAAKK

ARRRGH!

GAAAHH!

OOOOOOF!!

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

POOM

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

NO... HE'S HURT BAD...

STRATOS TOO...

...AND NOT ONE OF US HIT THE CURSED DISK...

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE *DOING*?!

LASERS AREN'T CUTTING IT.

WE'RE GOING TO RAM THAT DISK--AND *BLOW* THAT CROC *STRAIGHT BACK TO HELL.*

JUST GET READY TO...

ZZZZZPRRRKKKK

...JUMP--

AAAAIIEEEEE!

YAAARGH!

UHHH...

BY JAGA...

TEELA, *QUICKLY!*

CUT IT OUT!

EVASIVE MANEUVERS!

ZZZZZPRRRKKKK

WHOA! THAT WAS CLOSE. *HOW* DID YOU KNOW HE WAS GOING TO FRY US?

LET'S JUST SAY I HAVE A *SIXTH SENSE* ABOUT THESE THINGS.

SSSKKBOOOOMM

I DO BELIEVE YOU AND I ARE GOING PLACES, TEELA.

RRRAAAGGGH!

ONLY IF CATS REALLY *DO* LAND ON THEIR FEET!

WE'LL SHOW MAN-AT-ARMS HOW *WRONG* HE WAS, LEAVING HIS *MOST CAPABLE* COHORT ON THE BENCH, WON'T WE, SNARF?!

KA-BOOM

ARRGGH!

YYYIIIIEEE!!

ZZZZZZRRRRKKKKK

ER...IF YOU SAY SO, MR. ORKO, SIR.

SNARF! SNARF!

BOOOM

OOOOF!

SLLAAAMM

...ZZZZZZAAAAPPPPPPP

OUCHIE! SNARF...

...SNARF!!!

SSHHHATTTTTRRRR!

ER...WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

SNARF? SNARF?

YES! YES! ORKO DOES IT AGAIN!

UHHH... I CAN'T... HOLD THE ILLUSION... ANY LONGER...

YOU DID GREAT, SOLDIER...

I'M AMAZED YOU LASTED THIS LONG, OLD FRIEND...

SET!

BRACED!

BATTERIES AT FULL!

>UGH!< SHIELDS OF GRAYSKULL! PROTECT THIS SACRED FORTRESS!

SKKKBOOOM

FIRE!!!

RRAAAAAHHGHH!

TAKE THAT, YOU BOAR-Y BASTARD!

I TOLD YOU, DUNCAN...

...THUNDERIAN ENERGY-EXAGGERATORS ALWAYS GET THE JOB DONE!

YOU MEAN THE THING THAT ALMOST BLEW UP IN OUR FACE?

I SAID I WAS SORRY ABOUT THAT...

WELL THERE'LL BE NO MORE COCK-UPS OF THAT SORT ON MY WATCH, THANK YOU VERY MUCHH*HHAAAAHHH!*

KLUTCH

DUNCAN!

GGGGRRRRRRR

=URGK!= FIRE!

FIRE THE DAMNED EXAGGERATED CANNON! DON'T WORRY ABOUT--

WHAT THE *BLAZES* DO YOU THINK *YOU'RE* DOING?!

SAVING YOUR--=URGH!=-- STUBBORN HIDE, FRIEND...

FIRE, DAMN YOU!

I CAN'T GET A CLEAR SHOT...

CLEAR OR NOT, I GAVE YOU A *DIRECT*-- =UGH!=-- ORDER!

MUST YOU--=UHH!=-- *ALWAYS* BE SUCH A *HARD-ASS*?

=UMPH!= ALWAYS.

IT'S *NOT* CHARMING.

THE *LADIES* TELL ME *OTHERWISE*...

FIRE!!!

SKKKKKK

BOOOM

GRRROOAAAANN---

HURRAH! HURRAH! HURRAH!

I MUST SAY, THEY DID RATHER *BETTER* THAN I EVER SUSPECTED THEY COULD.

I WAS REFERRING TO THE *OTHER* SIDE...

WELL, THEY *WERE* THE *ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL*, AFTER ALL...

INDEED WE ARE...

AH.

IT APPEARS OUR *ENEMIES COMBINED* ARE QUITE *FORMIDABLE.*

FORTUNATELY, WE ARE *PREPARED* FOR THIS *EVENTUALITY*, ARE WE NOT?

ANCIENT SPIRITS OF EVIL...

IN YOUR FINAL, DYING THRASHES...

RELEASE THE TERRIBLE POWER...

THAT RESIDES IN YOUR ASHES...

BY JAGA!

LET THE WICKEDNESS FLOW...

BLACK AS HELL FROM YOU FOUR...

GIVE ALL YOUR DARK MIGHT...

...TO...
MUMM-RA!!!

BWAH
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA!

FREDDIE E.
WILLIAMS II.
Colwell

FREDDIE E.
WILLIAMS II
01/30/

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

HOW DOES IT FEEL, DO YOU SUPPOSE?

SPIRIT OF GRAYSKULL...

TO RACE TO THE RESCUE

BY JAGA.

...ARRIVING AGAINST ALL ODDS...

GGGRRRRRR

...ONLY TO FIND YOUR WORST FEARS REALIZED?

CHILLING AS COLD STEEL?

A-ADAM...

FATHER!

HE'S ALIVE...

...BARELY...

WARM AS FRESHLY SPILLED BLOOD?

DOES IT FEEL, DO YOU IMAGINE...

CHEETARA'S STILL BREATHING AS WELL...

...WE NEED TO GET THEM MEDICAL AID...

WE NEED TO HEAD INSIDE...

...OR ALL WILL BE LOST.

WATCH OVER THEM, CAT.

I WILL NOT FAIL YOU HE-MAN

...LIKE AN ENDING?

THE CLOSE OF A TALE...

I DON'T LIKE IT.

LEAVING FRIENDS AND FAMILY BEHIND.

NOR I, LION-O. BUT DEFENDING THE POWER IN THIS CASTLE IS *EVERYTHING.*

HOLD.

MY CONNECTION WITH THE SORCERESS... I CAN FEEL HER *PAIN*... HER *SCREAMS*...

...THIS WAY!

SEEMS SUCH A TERMINAL THING

BUT *TREAD CAREFULLY.*

GRAYSKULL IS AN ANCIENT FORTRESS FILLED WITH *MYSTERY.*

LOSE YOUR WAY INSIDE THESE WALLS...

...AND IT IS POSSIBLE YOU MIGHT *NEVER* RETURN.

HE-MAN?

ARE YOU *ALL RIGHT?*

AND THROUGH THERE?

NO *INVADER* HAS EVER *INFILTRATED* THIS *DEEPLY* BEFORE.

THE SECRET OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL.

EVEN I HAVE NEVER *CROSSED* THIS *THRESHOLD...*

SNIFF SNIFF!

THE SCENT OF BLOOD IS IN THE AIR.

BUT WHATEVER *LIES AHEAD...*

ENDINGS. THEY HOLD THE SWEET PROMISE OF RESOLUTION.

...WE FACE TOGETHER!

YES, VENTURE THIS WAY, VALIANT FOOLS!

...WHILE CONCEALING THE MONSTERS YOU'VE STILL LEFT TO SLAY!

MUMM-RA?!

SKELETOR?!

YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT! YOU MAY CALL US...

...MUMM-ATOR!

WELCOME TO THE *LIVING, BEATING HEART* OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL...

...THE *NEXUS OF ALL REALITIES*...

...*GATEWAY* TO OTHER *REALMS, OTHER DIMENSIONS*...

...AND *VAULT* TO THE VERY *SECRET* THIS CASTLE WAS *BUILT TO PROTECT*...

...THE *POWER* THAT *CREATED THE MULTIVERSE*...

...CONTAINED WITHIN THIS CRYSTALLINE SPHERE...

...THE *ORB OF POWER!!!*

UHHHH... HE-MAN... LION-O...

...THEY M-MUST NOT C-CLAIM THE ORB...

KLUDD

ARRRGH!!

WE KNEW IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THIS COW'S BLEATING CRIES WOULD DRAW YOU TO US...

...YOU SEE, DESPITE OUR BEST EFFORTS, THIS *DAMNABLE* ORB *REFUSES TO OPEN.* IT REQUIRES YOUR *DAMNABLE* SWORD. IT'S THE ETERNAL *KEY!*

SO HAND IT OVER WITH ALL SPEED, MUSCLE-BOY, OR WE *BREAK YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S NECK!*

NEVER!

KANG

KLASH

RRRAAHH!!

HA! HA!

BOY, OH BOY! YOU TWO REALLY ARE *FEISTY!*

AS WAS SHE.

BUT FEISTY WON'T CUT IT...

GAAAHH!

ARRHHH!

K'KAAA-RRAAKKKK!

...AGAINST THE EVER-LIVING LORD OF DESTRUCTION!

GRAYSKULL'S BANE!

(THESE DIMENSIONAL CROSSOVERS ARE TOUGH ON MY JAW...)

IT'S A GOOD THING THERE'S *TWO OF US.*

WHAT IF WE COULD SEPARATE MUMM-ATOR FROM THE ORB *AND* IMPRISON HIM FOREVER AT THE SAME TIME?

I'M LISTENING...

CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS AN "ANCIENT FORTRESS OF MYSTERY," IN CASE YOU WEREN'T AWARE...

...SEEMS A *"NEXUS OF ALL REALITIES"* WOULD BE A GREAT PLACE TO *LOSE* SOMETHING...OR *SOMEONE*...

YOU'RE A QUICK STUDY, KING LION-O.

THANK YOU, PRINCE ADAM.

YOU GO FOR THE ORB...

...I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE EVER-LIVING BONE-DOME.

KLUDD

GOT IT!

NO! FOOLS! WHAT ARE YOU--?

NO!

SSSUMMON!

THE ORB!

WHY MUST YOU TWO *ALWAYS* *COMPLICATE* THINGS SO?

WHOAAA!

YIIIIIIII!

HUP!

WHAT IS THIS *GODS-FORSAKEN* PLACE?

IT'S ETERNIA... BUT *NOT* ETERNIA...

AN ETERNIA AS ONLY *MUMM-ATOR* COULD *ENVISION* IT...

ARGHHFFF!

SORCERESS!

WITH THE ORB IN *MUMM-ATOR'S GRASP,* IT PULLED YOU ALL TO THE *REALITY MOST PLEASING* TO *THEM.*

YOU MUST STOP THEM...

[illegible]

WE WILL, I *SWEAR...*

YOU WERE TALKING TO *HER,* WEREN'T YOU?

NOTE TO SELF: TALKING TO AN INVISIBLE PERSON MAKES YOU LOOK CRAZY.

SO, DO YOU LIKE WHAT WE'VE DONE WITH THE PLACE, MUMM-RA?

BAH! LET US GET THE SWORD. GET THE POWER. GET ON WITH IT.

QUITE RIGHT, OLD BOY. APOLOGIES.

DON'T LOOK SO PLEASED WITH YOURSELVES, *SKELE-RA!*

KKKAAANGG

SPANNGG

THIS REALITY WILL *NEVER* COME TO PASS!

WHILE IT'S TRUE THIS DOMAIN CERTAINLY DOES HAVE ITS *CHARM...*

...DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE MUMM-ATOR WOULD BE CONTENT WITH ONLY *ONE* PUNY WORLD?!

HA!

KRAK

WHOA!

UGH

ZZZKRRAK

RGGHK

YOU UNDERESTIMATE THE *SCOPE* OF OUR *VISION!* OUR *WILL!* AND OUR *POWER!*

RRRHHHPPPP!

OH SHUT UP!

GLRAGGH!

LION-O! I'VE *GOT* THE *ORB!*

LET'S GO!

GLADLY!

NO!!

NOOOOOO!!

UMM... THIS ISN'T ETERNIA...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

HEY... UMM... HE-MAN? ISN'T THAT... *YOU?*

GREAT PHOTOS, JIM!

GOSH, THANKS, ADAM!

HEY *ETERNIAVILLE*, I'M NOT BUYING THAT MILD-MANNERED ACT FOR A SECOND.

I KNOW YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA *SCOOP* ME ON THE LEXCORP TRIAL...

I'M SURE I'VE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, LOIS...

GRAYSKULL! WHAT ARE YOU STILL DOING HERE? I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO...

BOOOOM

BRING ME THE ORB!

SO... ...*WHAT* EXACTLY IS ALL THIS?

ER... WELL... MY MOTHER'S FROM EARTH...

...I ALWAYS *WONDERED* WHAT MY LIFE MIGHT'VE BEEN LIKE HERE...

THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR...

AH, IS IT JUST ME, OR IS THIS KIND OF...?

YES, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE...

...CONCENTRATE ON ETERNIA.

AH! SUCCESS! ETERNOS CITY!

AND LOOK! YOUR FRIENDS ARE UP AND ABOUT.

DUNCAN! TEELA!

CHEETEELA, DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE STRANGERS?

THEY REMIND ME OF HE-O...

...ONLY HALF AS HANDSOME...

I SENSE THESE TRAVELERS ARE FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION, PANTHRO-AT-ARMS...

JAGARESS!

THEY MEAN US NO HARM.

THEY BETTER NOT...

...OR I'LL SPELL THEM INTO NEXT WEEK!

SNARFO! SNARFO!

...

MAYBE HOLDING THE ORB TOGETHER WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA...?

NOT GOOD AT ALL.

SHAAAZZAAAAM

THERE IS NOWHERE YOU CAN RUN...

...THAT MUMM-ATOR CANNOT FOLLOW!

THE ORB OF POWER...

...WILL...

...BE...

...OURS!

THAAA-KKOOOMMM

PROTECT CASTLE CATSKUUULLLLL!!!

DESPITE THE VASTNESS OF THE MULTIVERSE...

GGRAH!

...THERE IS ONE CONSTANT...

...OUR LIMITLESS HATRED OF YOU TWO!

KRRAK!

ARRGH!

AH! THE ORB OF POWER! SEE?

OURS!

NOW WE JUST NEED THE SWORD...

GUUTTTT!

THEN LET ME FINALLY GRANT YOUR HEART'S DESIRE!

HHHHHA--

--HAHAHAHAHAHA!

DON'T YOU KNOW BY NOW WE'VE NO HEART TO PIERCE?!

HA!

KWAKKK!

NOW WHAT SAY WE STOP ALL THIS TOMFOOLERY?

ZZHHRR

VVVMMMMMMM

GIVE US THE ORB!

ZZTHHRRKK

NO! THEY HAVE THE SWORD!
I HAVE THE ORB.
THEY'LL BRING THE SWORD BACK TO US.
WE JUST NEED TO BE--
LION-O?
LION-O... WHAT IS IT?
GHOSTS...?
YOU MUST GET ABOARD, MY KING! WE HAVE ONLY MINUTES...
YOUR SHIP'S NAVIGATION COMPUTER WILL NOT SEE YOU SAFELY THROUGH THIS CRISIS UNLESS SOMEONE STAYS BEHIND TO BOOST ITS GUIDANCE SYSTEMS.
BUT CLAUDUS...
YOU MUST SEE TO THE PRINCE'S SAFETY. I'VE A GRAVITY CAPSULE HIDDEN NEARBY. I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND...
FATHER! COME SEE THE STARSHIP! I SAVED YOU A SEAT UP FRONT!
HOW ABOUT YOU BE CAPTAIN OF THE STARSHIP, LION-O, AND I'LL JOIN YOU AND JAGA A LITTLE LATER?
OH BOY! REALLY?!
THUNDERCATS HOOOOOO!
THERE'S NO ONE ELSE IN ALL THE UNIVERSE I'D ENTRUST WITH MY SON, YOU MANGY OLD CAT.
SEE YOU IN THE STARS, SIRE.
WE'RE ON THUNDERA... THE HOMEWORLD OF MY PEOPLE...
...JUST BEFORE IT EXPLODED... JUST BEFORE...
...BEFORE MY FATHER DIED.
HOW CAN THIS BE? HOW CAN WE REALLY BE HERE? IT'S NO ILLUSION.
THAT WAS MY FATHER, HE-MAN!
WE TRAVEL THROUGH DIMENSIONS, LION-O. SPACE... AND TIME.
DIMENSIONS OF POSSIBILITY, PROBABILITY, AND, APPARENTLY, OF THE PAST.
WE...
SHAZAAM!
AH, THERE YOU ARE!

SWAAKKK

ARE WE...? IS THIS THUNDERA?

GODS, HOW WE'VE ALWAYS DESPISED THIS ROCK!

MUMM-ATOR!

TOLD YOU THEY'D COME TO US!

ON THE *UPSIDE*, WE WILL SO *ENJOY KILLING YOU BOTH* AS THIS GODFORSAKEN BALL OF MUD *RIPS ITSELF TO PIECES!*

FFFISTO!

SLAKLANG!

WHY, THE *LOOK ON YOUR FACE* ALONE, *LION-O*, IS WORTH THE PRICE OF ADMISSION!

I DON'T THINK YOU'VE PAID ANYWHERE NEAR ENOUGH!

SKLOUNK

GAAHHHH!

GLAHH!

KNAK-RAAKK

IN YOUR COMBINED FORM YOU'RE JUST *TWICE THE CLOWNS* YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN...

...AND *NO ONE'S LAUGHING!*

THAT'S NOT *ENTIRELY* TRUE...

OOOOFFF!

SSLAAAHHH

HUUUGHH!

...WE QUITE AMUSE OURSELVES!

HAHAHAHA!

NOW, HOW 'BOUT IF YOU FINE FELLOWS LET *US* DRIVE THIS TIME?

WE'RE BACK? CASTLE GRAYSKULL!

HE-MAN! THE ORB? I...

WORRY NOT, *CHILDREN!* MUMM-ATOR HAS *EVERYTHING* WELL IN HAND!

THE *ORB OF POWER* IS *OURS!*

AS IS THE *KEY* THAT WILL FINALLY *UNLOCK* IT!

SOMEHOW...

THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL WILL SOON MAKE US THE *MASTER OF THE MULTIVERSE!*

AS FOR YOU TWO...

...WE'RE AFRAID WE'VE *MORE IMPORTANT* MATTERS, AND CAN *NO LONGER ATTEND TO YOU PERSONALLY.*

HEHEHEH!

GRRR!

VAWOOOM

ATTACK!

FORTUNATELY, OUR *INTERDIMENSIONAL MINIONS* ARE NEVER MORE THAN A MAGICAL GESTURE AWAY!

ENJOY, KIDDIES!

INDEED, WHY WOULD YOU STAND AND FIGHT YOUR OWN BATTLES, YOU *COWARDLY, CONNIVING CRETIN?!*

OOOOOOOF

BUT HE-MAN AND LION-O WILL *NOT* FIGHT ALONE...

YOU TWO DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE!

WE'LL HANDLE THESE *ANIMALS!*

KRA-LANGGG!

OOoOoOoK?

SEAFOOD ANYONE?

SHATTER

SPLAT!

WWWAATeERRRR...

ALREADY HAVE, THANKS!

SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

WHIPPKLAMM!

GLURRGG!

YIPE!

SWAAK!

OH PLEASE

HIT HIM TILL HE STAYS DOWN?

KA-BONNNG

TAKE THAT, YOU DIRTY RAT!

BOOOM

CLOMP

GAH! GLY GLAW!!

VSSSHHVSSSHHVSSSHH

SNARF!

KA-PUNT!

YOWWLL!

NO!

HE'S UNLOCKING THE ORB OF POWER!

VSSH

YOU GO FOR THE ORB. I'LL GET THE SWORD.

THEN, LOTS OF HITTING.

LOTS.

YESS...

VSSSHHOOOOOOW!

HA HA HA HA HA HA!

NO...

OH YES! YES!!

EVEN AS WE SPEAK, THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL FLOWS INTO US!

SURELY YOU MUST FEEL IT...

...LEAVING YOU?

ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN, MONSTER...

...IT'LL BE LEAVING YOU...

...SOON ENOUGHKKKK!

SLL-THUNK

WE UNDERSTAND YOUR FRUSTRATION...

"...MOST POWERFUL MAN IN THE UNIVERSE..."

...NO LONGER...

...AND HIS FAITHFUL SIDEKICK, HE-CAT!

GGGRRAAAAAAAGGG!

KRRAAAAK

IT'S OVER, YOU MUSCLE-BOUND BUFFOON!

FINALLY, DELICIOUSLY OVER!

WE HAVE TAKEN YOUR PRECIOUS POWER, WE WILL TAKE YOUR SORRY, WASTED LIFE, AND THEN...

GUHHH!

SHUNK

ARRGGHH!!!

KILL HIS FAMILY, PISS ON HIS GRAVE, BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.

YOU TWO REALLY ARE GABBY OLD WINDBAGS.

HERE.

THANKS. YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'LL LIVE...

...YOU?

I CAN FEEL THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL SEEPING OUT OF ME.

EVEN IF I CHANNEL EVERY LAST OUNCE OF POWER I'VE LEFT INTO ONE FINAL BLOW--

MUMM-RA AND SKELETOR COMBINED THEIR POWERS...MAYBE WE CAN TOO?

LIKE WHAT HAPPENED WITH SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT? IT COULD WORK...

...OR WE COULD END UP BLOWING OURSELVES TO BITS.

THIS IS THE LAST SHOT WE'RE GOING TO GET.

IT'S A GOOD THING THERE ARE TWO OF US.

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

SWORD OF OMENS...

BUT I WAS SO CLOSE!

SHAAAK KA-THOOOM!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! NO...NO...

NOOO!

BUT I WAS SO CLOSE!

WE HAVE THE POWER BEYOND POWER!!!!

BOOOOOMM

HA! ADAM! LONG TIME NO SEE!

SO...WE DIDN'T BLOW OURSELVES UP?

WORRY NOT, PRINCE ADAM...

...THE ORB OF POWER IS *RESTORED*...

...AND THE DIMENSIONAL RIFT BETWEEN OUR WORLDS IS RAPIDLY HEALING.

YOUR COMRADES HAVE DEFEATED MUMM-ATOR'S MINIONS.

SKELETOR AND MUMM-RA ARE VANQUISHED!

OF COURSE, PAST EPISODES HAVING TAUGHT US A THING OR TWO, WE'VE CERTAINLY NOT SEEN THE LAST OF THEM.

BUT TODAY...WE CELEBRATE!

LION-O?

I'M GOING.

YES, WITH THE RIFT CLOSING...

I'M GOING BACK TO THUNDERA.

THIS TIME I CAN *DO* SOMETHING. I KNOW HOW. I DON'T HAVE TO *RUN AWAY!*

I CAN *SAVE MY HOMEWORLD.* SAVE MY...

...SAVE MY FATHER...

YOU *COULD* GO BACK AND SAVE YOUR WORLD, LION-O, I'VE NO DOUBT...

...BUT YOU'D BE *ALTERING* THE HERE AND NOW IN WAYS YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY IMAGINE.

OUR EXPERIENCES, GOOD AND BAD, ARE WHAT *MAKE US WHO WE ARE.*

NO ONE CAN CHANGE HISTORY. WE CAN ONLY LEARN FROM IT.

YOUR *DESTINY* LIES IN THE *PRESENT,* NOT THE PAST, MY FRIEND.

I BELIEVE YOU WILL BE A *HERO* NOT JUST TO ONE WORLD...

...BUT TO THE *UNIVERSE!*

FOR MY OWN PART, I DO NOT BELIEVE IN ENDINGS.

GENTLEMEN, IT WAS A GENUINE *HONOR AND PRIVILEGE.* A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM... CRAFTED BY MINE OWN HANDS.

RIGHT BACK ATCHA, DUNCAN. MADE THESE FOR YOU. THIS MAKES YOU AN *HONORARY THUNDERCAT.*

AND WE THOUGHT YOU'D ENJOY TOYING WITH THE THUNDARIAN *FORMULA* FOR *ENERGY EXAGGERATION,* HMMM?

YOU 'CATS ARE TRYING TO MAKE ME CRY, BUT THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN!

I HAVE SEEN TOO MUCH.

WELL, ORKO, IT'S BEEN... AHH...

...A REAL EXPERIENCE! THIS IS FOR YOU.

OH. AH. NOT MUCH OF A SURFER MYSELF...

...BUT THANK YOU! AND THESE ARE FOR YOU!

NO HARD FEELINGS ABOUT, YOU KNOW...

...ACCIDENTALLY SHRINKING YOUR HEADS...?

ZAP ZAP ZOWIE

HEEEY!

NO, NOT AT ALL!

NONE! HA HA HA HA HA!

FOR YOU. SNARF SNACKIES!

CRINGER COOKIES!

YUM!

YUM!

BEEN TOO MUCH.

MASTER.

SLAVE.

SO MUCH MORE.

MUST WE EXCHANGE WEAPONS NOW?

GODS, NO!

YOU KNOW THAT I SOMETIMES SEE GLIMPSES OF THINGS TO COME...

...AND YOU, MY SISTER, HAVE QUITE THE MAGICAL JOURN--

TEELA! A WORD! NOW, DAUGHTER!

ANNNNNND THE UNIVERSE RETURNS TO NORMAL...

FATE AND FORTUNE FOREVER DANCE THEIR CAPRICIOUS DANCE.

MOVE IT, YOU!

QUIT SHOVIN'!

READY TO GO, LION-O.

BE RIGHT THERE, PANTHRO...

HEROES RISE AND FALL.

BUT EVIL...

ETERNIA OWES THE THUNDERCATS OUR ETERNAL GRATITUDE.

YOU'RE LOOKING HEALTHIER THAN LAST I SAW YOU.

THANKS TO YOUR SORCERESS. WHAT IS THAT? A... BELT?

IT'S GOING TO BE STRANGE, NOW--MY FATHER KNOWING I'M HE-MAN...

...NO MORE SECRET IDENTITY...

IT'S PROBABLY BEST THERE BE NO SECRETS BETWEEN FATHERS AND SONS.

NOW YOU CAN BE YOUR TRUE SELF AT ALL TIMES.

WHETHER YOU'RE CALLED HE-MAN OR ADAM, YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE...

...A HERO.

YOU ARE QUITE WISE FOR SOMEONE OUR AGE...

...PERFECT, POISONOUS EVIL...

HEH. ACTUALLY, I'VE A CONFESSION. DESPITE MY APPEARANCE...

...I'M ONLY TWELVE YEARS OLD...

NO!

WHAT IS IT YOU THUNDERCATS SAY...?

...BY JAGA!

IT'S TRUE.

...AS LONG AS EVIL EXISTS...

MY FRIEND, IF YOU ARE THIS WISE, BRAVE AND NOBLE AND STILL ONLY A BOY...

...I CAN ONLY IMAGINE THE TRULY GREAT KING YOU WILL BECOME!

FAREWELL, LION-O!

FAREWELL, ADAM, MY FRIEND!

...MUMM-RA LIVES!

THUNDERCATS! HOOOOOOOOO!

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL!

THE END...?